

OXFORD

INTERNATIONAL
AQA EXAMINATIONS

INTERNATIONAL GCSE ENGLISH LITERATURE

(9275)

Paper 1 - Prose and Drama

Example responses with commentary

For teaching from September 2016 onwards
For GCSE exams in May/June 2018 onwards

This guide includes some further example material which provides responses to a further set of specimen questions for Paper 1 Section A Literary non-fiction.

It is intended to provide some examples of the kind of responses that might be submitted with some exemplification of the mark scheme connected to that response. Each series, the intention is to provide further exemplary responses as they become available.

GENERAL MARK SCHEME

Paper 1 Questions 1–24 (30 marks – AO1=12, AO2=12, AO3=6)

AO1: Understanding of, and engagement with, themes, ideas and contexts - 40%

AO2: Analysis of how writers create meanings and effects - 40%

AO3: Express informed, personal responses to literary texts, using appropriate terminology, and coherent, accurate writing - 20%

| Mark | AO | Typical features | How to arrive at a mark |
|--|-----|--|--|
| Level 6 Convincing, critical analysis and exploration 26–30 marks | AO1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> exploration of themes/ideas/perspectives/contextual factors shown by specific, detailed links between context/text/task judicious use of precise references to support interpretation(s). | <p>At the top of the level, a candidate's response is likely to be a critical, exploratory, well-structured argument. It takes a conceptualised approach to the full task supported by a range of judicious references. There will be a fine-grained and insightful analysis of language and form and structure. Convincing exploration of one or more theme/idea/perspective/contextual factor/interpretation.</p> <p>At the bottom of the level, a candidate will have Level 5 and be starting to demonstrate elements of exploratory thought and/or analysis of writer's methods and /or contexts.</p> |
| | AO2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> analysis of writer's methods exploration of effects of writer's methods on reader. | |
| | AO3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> critical, exploratory, conceptualised response to task and whole text. | |
| Level 5 Thoughtful, developed consideration 21–25 marks | AO1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> thoughtful consideration of themes/ideas/perspectives/contextual factors shown by examination of detailed links between context/text/task apt references integrated into interpretation(s). | <p>At the top of the level, a candidate's response is likely to be thoughtful, detailed and developed. It takes a considered approach to the full task with references integrated into interpretation; there will be a detailed examination of the effects of language and/or structure and/or form. Examination of themes/ideas/perspectives/contextual factors, possibly including alternative interpretations/deeper meanings.</p> <p>At the bottom of the level, a candidate will have Level 4 and be starting to demonstrate elements of thoughtful consideration and/or examination of writer's methods and/or contexts.</p> |
| | AO2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> examination of writer's methods consideration of effects of writer's methods on reader. | |
| | AO3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> thoughtful, developed response to task and whole text. | |

| | | | |
|--|-----|--|---|
| Level 4 Clear understanding 16–20 marks | AO1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clear understanding of themes/ideas/perspectives/contextual factors shown by specific links between context/text/task • effective use of references to support explanation. | <p>At the top of the level, a candidate's response is likely to be clear, sustained and consistent. It takes a focused response to the full task which demonstrates clear understanding. It uses a range of references effectively to illustrate and justify explanation; there will be clear explanation of the effects of a range of writer's methods. Clear understanding of themes/ideas/perspectives/contextual factors.</p> <p>At the bottom of the level, a candidate will have Level 3 and be starting to demonstrate elements of understanding and/or explanation of writer's methods and/or contexts.</p> |
| | AO2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clear explanation of writer's methods • understanding of effects of writer's methods on reader. | |
| | AO3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clear, explained response to task and whole text. | |
| Level 3 Explained, structured comments 11–15 marks | AO1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some understanding of implicit themes/ideas/perspectives/contextual factors shown by links between context/text/task • references used to support a range of relevant comments. | <p>At the top of the level, a candidate's response is likely to be explanatory in parts. It focuses on the full task with a range of points exemplified by relevant references from the text; there will be identification of effects of a range of writer's methods. Explanation of some relevant ideas/contextual factors.</p> <p>At the bottom of the level, a candidate will have Level 2 and be starting to explain and/or make relevant comments on writer's methods and/or contexts.</p> |
| | AO2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explained/relevant comments on writer's methods • identification of effects of writer's methods on reader. | |
| | AO3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some explained response to task and whole text. | |

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| Level 2 Supported, relevant comments 6–10 marks | AO1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some awareness of implicit themes/ideas/contextual factors • comments on references. | <p>At the top of the level, a candidate’s response is likely to be relevant and supported by some explanation. It will include some focus on the task with relevant comments and some supporting references from the text. There will be identification of effects of deliberate choices made by writer. Awareness of some contextual factors.</p> <p>At the bottom of the level, a candidate’s response will have Level 1 and be starting to focus on the task and/or starting to show awareness of the writer making choices and/or awareness of contexts.</p> |
| | AO2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identification of writers’ methods • comments on effects of methods on reader. | |
| | AO3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supported response to task and text. | |
| Level 1 Simple, explicit comments 1–5 marks | AO1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • simple comment on explicit ideas/contextual factors • reference to relevant details. | <p>At the top of the level, a candidate’s response is likely to be narrative and/or descriptive in approach. It may include awareness of the task and provide appropriate reference to text; there will be simple identification of method. Simple comments/responses to context, usually explicit.</p> <p>At the bottom of the level, a candidate’s response will show some familiarity with the text.</p> |
| | AO2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • awareness of writer making deliberate choices • simple comment on effect. | |
| | AO3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • simple comments relevant to task and text. | |
| 0 marks | nothing worthy of credit/nothing written | | |

QUESTION 01

Section A: Prose

Answer **one** question from this section on your chosen text

Charles Dickens: *Great Expectations*

0 1 In this extract Pip meets Miss Havisham for the first time.

She was dressed in rich materials – satins, and lace, and silks – all of white. Her shoes were white. And she had a long white veil dependent from her hair, and she had bridal flowers in her hair, but her hair was white. Some bright jewels sparked on her neck and on her hands, and some other jewels lay sparkling on the table. Dresses, less splendid than the dress she wore, and half-packed trunks, were scattered about. She had not quite finished dressing, for she had but one shoe on – the other was on the table near her hand – her veil was but half arranged, her watch and chain were not put on, and some lace for her bosom lay with those trinkets, and with her handkerchief, and gloves, and some flowers, and a Prayer-book, all confusedly heaped about the looking-glass.

It was not in the first few moments that I saw all these things, though I saw more of them in the first moments than might be supposed. But, I saw that everything within my view which ought to be white, had been white long ago, and had lost its lustre, and was faded and yellow. I saw that the bride within the bridal dress had withered like the dress, and like the flowers, and had no brightness left but the brightness of her sunken eyes. I saw that the dress had been put upon the rounded figure of a young woman, and that the figure upon which it now hung loose, had shrunk to skin and bone. Once, I had been taken to see some ghastly waxwork at the Fair, representing I know not what impossible personage lying in state. Once, I had been taken to our old marsh churches to see a skeleton in the ashes of a rich dress that had been dug out of a vault under the church pavement. Now, waxwork and skeleton seemed to have dark eyes that moved and looked at me. I should have cried out, if I could.

Starting with this extract, explore how Dickens presents the character of Miss Havisham in *Great Expectations*.

[30 marks]

MARK SCHEME

Section A: Prose

| | | |---|---| | 0 | 1 | |---|---| Charles Dickens: *Great Expectations*

Starting with this extract, explore how Dickens presents the character of Miss Havisham in *Great Expectations*.

[30 marks]

Indicative content

Examiners are encouraged to reward any valid interpretations. Answers might be some of the following:

AO1

- what Miss Havisham is like in this extract
- Pip's assumption that Miss Havisham is his benefactor and the effect this has on him.
- the details of Miss Havisham's past that Pip discovers later in the novel.
- Miss Havisham's eventual death in the fire.

AO2

- use of Pip as narrator so Miss Havisham is seen through the eyes of a child at the start of the novel
- how the reader's view of her changes as the narrator matures
- gothic imagery and language in this extract and elsewhere, eg references to skeleton and waxwork
- foreshadowing of Miss Havisham's death in the novel
- structure – reader meets Miss Havisham and forms an initial impression which might then be revised when her history is revealed.

AO3

Examiners are looking to award the student's proficiency in:

- presenting an argument
- organising their thoughts
- responding to the task
- communicating their ideas.

STUDENT A

Miss Havisham is one of Dickens' most intriguing and grotesque female characters and, because we share the viewpoint of the narrator, Pip, who is a child when he first meets Miss Havisham, we, like him, are initially intrigued by the appearance of this Gothic figure and, like Pip, our feelings turn to pity later on.

In the extract Dickens creates a shocking visual image of a woman for whom time stopped at the very moment, twenty to nine, that she was jilted by her fiancée. Dickens repeats the word 'white' frequently and the reader is at first drawn in to the description, assuming it to be that of a young bride. However, the cumulative effect of the repetition assumes a more sinister tone when the adjective is used to describe the bride's hair: the first sign that this is not, in fact, a youthful bride preparing for a happy day, but an old woman. The room is crowded with details which overwhelm Pip's senses, so he takes in – and describes – the contents of the room as he sees them, precisely because they are so strange to him. The contrast of what we expect from a wedding scene and the reality of Miss Havisham's room is shocking; the incongruity of the once-white dress, the jewels, the flowers and the shrunken aged figure of Miss Havisham creates an eerie and unnerving atmosphere which is added to by the imagery Dickens uses, comparing Miss Havisham to a 'ghastly waxwork' and a skeleton dug from the marshes. These details make us share Pip's fear of Miss Havisham, but we are also intrigued to find out her story and why she has incarcerated herself in her house for twenty-five years.

It is on this visit to Miss Havisham's that Pip first meets Estella and structurally this sets in motion Miss Havisham's plan to take revenge on Pip, as a representative of all men, because of her own experiences by using Estella to 'break their hearts'. Estella has been adopted by Miss Havisham and brought up to be charming, beautiful and seductive but unable to love. When Pip and Estella meet later in the novel and Pip is obviously attracted to Estella Miss Havisham gleefully murmurs under her breath 'Break their hearts, my pride and hope, break their hearts and have no mercy!' The plan works, to a certain extent at least, because Pip does fall in love with Estella and she does break his heart by marrying the cruel and oafish Bentley Drummle. Even when Pip is told the story of Miss Havisham's tragic past by Herbert and begins to understand her motivation and pity her, it is too late as Estella's heartlessness is too ingrained to be easily overcome. At the end of the novel Pip and Estella meet and are reconciled and there is hope of a happy future for them, although this was not the original ending of the novel which saw no such reconciliation: Dickens bowed to pressure from his readers to change his original ending thus, perhaps changing our perceptions of Miss Havisham and lessening the severity of her influence on other characters.

Miss Havisham is also important because Pip assumes she is his benefactor who is responsible for his 'great expectations' in London. Pip thinks that Miss Havisham is paying for his education in order to make him a suitable match for Estella and it is this misunderstanding that shapes Pip's development for much of the novel: he becomes snobbish and shallow, rejecting Joe and Biddy, blinded to their good qualities by his desire to acquire the social status he thinks is what will make Estella love him. It is only when he finds out about Magwitch that he realises he has turned his back on his family for the sake of someone who is not capable of love.

Although there are few elements of the supernatural in *Great Expectations*, Dickens uses Gothic tropes of the kind that were popular in Victorian fiction to create a sense of mystery around Miss Havisham and to foreshadow her inevitable, tragic end. She is often seen staring into the fire and Pip describes strange fires in her room. Just before he leaves her for the final time before she is burnt Pip has a vision: 'I fancied that I saw Miss Havisham hanging to the beam. So strong was the impression that I stood under the beam shuddering from head to foot before I knew it was a fancy.' And Miss Havisham tells Pip she will be laid on the bridal table in her room when she dies – as indeed she is. These incidents help reinforce the ultimate sadness of Miss Havisham's life: deprived of happiness herself, her attempts to make others suffer in the way she has bring her no joy and her final plea, on her death bed, is simply that Pip will forgive her for the wrongs she has done him.

Miss Havisham, then, is important to the plot of *Great Expectations* as she provides the impetus for Pip to fall in love with Estella and has manipulated Estella to such an extent that this relationship is extremely difficult. Dickens uses her to show the destructive effects of negative emotions and how repentance can sometimes come too late. However, her main function in the novel is clearly seen in the passage: she is a Gothic, grotesque figure who scares the young Pip and intrigues the reader, adding to the mysterious atmosphere in the first half of the novel.

EXAMINER COMMENTARY

This response is well-structured, covering a range of points about Miss Havisham. The extract is used as a starting point from which the student moves into the rest of the novel. Examiners have no expectations about how much of the response is based on the extract and how much is based on the rest of the text but this is one effective way of answering this type of question. In a closed book exam, the extract can be an accessible way for students to write about AO2 and this student has used the details of Miss Havisham's physical description – the repetition of the word 'white' for example – to do this. Context is dealt with lightly and this is a strength of the response; the student deals with literary context (Dickens' re-writing of the ending and the use of the Gothic) rather than historical or social context. No one way of considering context is privileged in this specification and, indeed, there is no compulsion to write about context at all – the mark scheme refers to 'themes/ideas/perspectives/contextual factors/interpretations' meaning that students do not need to write about all of these aspects of a text.

The student has a good knowledge of the whole novel and can range round the text effectively, using judicious references to support ideas.

This response would be placed towards the top of Level 6.

QUESTION 04

Harper Lee: *To Kill a Mockingbird*

0 4 In this extract Scout meets Boo Radley for the first time.

He was still leaning against the wall. He had been leaning against the wall when I came into the room, his arms folded across his chest. As I pointed he brought his arms down and pressed the palms of his hand against the wall. They were white hands, sickly white hands that had never seen the sun, so white they stood out garishly against the dull cream wall in the dim light of Jem's room.

I looked from his hands to his sand-stained khaki pants; my eyes travelled up his thin frame to his torn denim shirt. His face was as white as his hands, but for a shadow on his jutting chin. His cheeks were thin to hollowness; his mouth was wide; there were shallow, almost delicate indentations at his temple, and his grey eyes were so colourless I thought I was blind. His hair was dead and thin, almost feathery on top of his head.

When I pointed to him his palms slipped slightly, leaving greasy sweat streaks on the wall, and he hooked his thumbs in his belt. A strange small spasm shook him, as if he heard fingernails scrape slate, but as I gazed at him in wonder the tension slowly drained from his face. His lips parted into a timid smile and our neighbour's image blurred with sudden tears.

'Hey, Boo,' I said.

How does Lee present different aspects of justice and the law in *To Kill a Mockingbird*?

[30 marks]

MARK SCHEME

| | | |---|---| | 0 | 4 | |---|---| Harper Lee: *To Kill a Mockingbird*

How does Lee present different aspects of justice and the law in *To Kill a Mockingbird*?

[30 marks]

Indicative content

Examiners are encouraged to reward any valid interpretations. Answers might, however include some of the following:

AO1

- details of some of the ‘crimes’ committed in the novel, eg Mayella’s ‘rape’; attack on children at end; Bob Ewell’s death
- details of some of the ways the law is applied to these events, eg trial of Tom Robinson – prejudice shown by many character but Atticus and other characters shown to make small steps in establishing a more equal application of the law; Atticus’ insistence that Jem should stand trial for killing Ewell
- some ideas about the difference between the law and justice, eg Tom Robinson found guilty when he is obviously not; Sheriff’s insistence that Ewell ‘fell on his knife’.

AO2

- language used to describe characters and their reactions at various points in the trial, eg cocky attitude of Bob Ewell; descriptions of crowd
- use of contrasts, eg Tom vs Bob
- language used to describe Atticus during the trial and at the end of the novel
- use of Scout as narrator to show inequalities in system and the differences between justice and the law.

AO3

Examiners are looking to award the student’s proficiency in;

- presenting an argument
- organising their thoughts
- responding to the task
- communicating their ideas.

STUDENT A

The law is very important in *To Kill a Mockingbird*. The main event in the novel is the trial of Tom Robinson and him being found guilty when he is obviously innocent and Atticus who is one of the main characters is a lawyer, so this shows just how important the law is.

Tom Robinson is a black man who is accused of attacking and raping a white woman called Mayella Ewell. Everybody in Maycomb (the town where the novel is set) is racist except for a few people like Atticus who thinks that everyone should be treated equally. He says 'in our courts all men are created equal' which means that the law applies to everyone and it's not fair that Tom should be considered guilty just because of the colour of his skin. Tom could not have attacked Mayella because his arm was injured and he wouldn't have been able to strangle her like she said. He was only trying to help her move some furniture but she liked him and tried to kiss him which made him frightened because her knew he would get in trouble for kissing a white girl so he ran away. Mayella's father, Bob Ewell, could not believe that his daughter wanted to kiss a black man which would have shocked people in those days, so he told everyone that Tom had attacked his daughter. What happens in the trial, when Tom is found guilty even though Atticus proves he didn't do it, shows that there is no justice in America in the 1930s and that you would be judged on the colour of your skin not whether you were guilty or not.

Atticus does try to help though and Harper Lee shows that this means things were starting to change and some people were thinking that the law should change and be fair to everyone. Some of the jury voted for Tom being innocent and this was unusual that even one white person (all the jury were white men) would believe a black man. Atticus is pleased about this and calls it a step in the right direction even though it is only a 'baby step' but Atticus' children Jem and Scout, don't understand and Jem is upset because he believes in the law and is disappointed in it because Tom is found guilty.

When Tom is in prison before his trial some of the white Maycomb men try to get to him to kill him but fortunately Atticus has realised they might try to do that and he stops them. They are angry with Atticus because they think that a black man who raped a white woman deserves to be killed and they are not prepared to wait for the law to decide. Atticus does not believe in taking the law into your own hands though and he will not let them hurt Tom even though they get angry at him because of this. This shows how much Atticus believes in the law and that it should be upheld at all times.

Atticus teaches his children to obey the law at all times. Even at the end when Bob Ewell is killed and Atticus thinks Jem has done it Atticus wants the sheriff to be called and thinks that Jem should be in court and on trial but the sheriff says that it was an accident. This could be Lee saying that the sometimes you have to go against the law and even though the law says that Jem should stand trial, sometimes justice is more important than the law and the sheriff knows that it is justice that Bob dies because he caused the death of an innocent man.

One of the methods Lee uses to tell the story is first person narrative. The narrator is Scout, Atticus' daughter, and the reader can understand her thoughts about the events in the book and about law and justice. Because she is a child she doesn't understand and Atticus has to explain to her which means that he explains to the readers as well. This is the effect of having a first person narrator.

The law and justice is very important in 'To Kill a Mockingbird' then, because it's what the whole story is about and Harper Lee wanted to show that the law should be fair to everyone not just white people.

EXAMINER COMMENTARY

This response has some understanding of the importance of the law and justice in the novel, although the two are dealt with as though they are synonymous most of the time and it is only in the paragraph about the death of Bob Ewell that the possibility that law and justice are not the same starts to be dealt with at all. A response which started to develop by unpicking the differences between these in more detail and with more specific references would be showing qualities which are typical of Level 5: 'developed' and 'thoughtful'. This response does not do this, however, and it is worth reminding students that much care is taken over the wording of questions, so if two terms are used, as in this case, it is because the two words open up different, interesting lines of exploration.

The response is rather narrative and there are few quotations or precise textual references. General references to events in the novel are used to support a range of points but a more detailed knowledge of the text would have helped the student move more securely into Level 4.

The student is aware of the necessity to write about authorial methods but this manifests itself as a slightly 'bolt-on' section at the end of the essay about the narrative voice. This could have been integrated into the main body of the essay and had the student known the text in more detail, there could have been more opportunities to analyse techniques elsewhere.

Overall, this is a clear response to the text and the task and that clarity means it just gets into the bottom of Level 4.

Comments on ideas, methods and contexts tend to be explained rather than clear which is why it does not get any higher in the Level.

QUESTION 05

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie: *Purple Hibiscus*

0 5 In this extract Kambili and Jaja are staying with their Auntie Ifeoma. It is their first meal with the family.

The dining table was made of wood that cracked in dry weather. The outermost layer was shedding, like a molting cricket, brown slices curling up from the surface. The dining chairs were mismatched. Four were made of plain wood, the kind of chairs in my classroom, and the other two were black and padded. Jaja and I sat side by side.

Auntie Ifeoma said the grace, and after my cousins said “Amen”, I still had my eyes closed.

“*Nne*, we have finished praying. We do not say Mass in the name of grace like your father does,” Auntie Ifeoma said with a chuckle.

I opened my eyes, just in time to catch Amaka watching me.

“I hope Kambili and Jaja come every day so we can eat like this. Chicken and soft drinks!” Obiora pushed at his glasses as we spoke.

“Mommy! I want the chicken leg”. Chima said.

“I think these people have started to put less Coke in the bottles”. Amaka said, holding her Coke bottle back to examine it.

I look down at the jollof rice, fried plantains, and half of a drumstick on my plate and tried to concentrate, tried to get the food down. The plates too, were mismatched.

Chima and Obiora used plastic ones while the rest of us had plain glass plates, bereft of dainty flowers or silver lines. Laughing floated over my head. Words spurted from everyone, often not seeking and not getting any response. We always spoke with a purpose back home, especially at the table, but my cousins seemed to simply speak and speak and speak.

Starting with this extract, explore how Adichie presents family life in *Purple Hibiscus*.

[30 marks]

MARK SCHEME

0 5 Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie: *Purple Hibiscus*

Starting with this extract, explore how Adichie presents family life in *Purple Hibiscus*.

[30 marks]

Indicative content

Examiners are encouraged to reward any valid interpretations. Answers might, however, include some of the following:

AO1

- Kambili's family life – violence and oppression of Papa and reactions of the other family members closeness within family, eg Jaja taking the blame for Papa's death
- the children's relationship with Papa Nnukwu and how he is viewed by Papa
- Kambili's visit to Aunty Ifeoma and the relationships within Ifeoma's family.

AO2

- use of contrasts – Kambili's family/Aunty Ifeoma's family
- use of dialogue – language used by Kambili and Jaja in their family situation; language used by Ifeoma's children
- use of Kambili as narrator – possibly unreliable narrator.

AO3

Examiners are looking to award the student's proficiency in:

- presenting an argument
- organising their thoughts
- responding to the task
- communicating their ideas.

STUDENT A

In 'Purple Hibiscus' Adichie presents contrasting views of family life; the extract depicts a typical meal at Auntie Ifeoma's house with the children expressing opinions and the whole family joining in the conversation which is trivial and often consists of remarks which do not require a response. Kambili comments on the difference between this family environment and her own, where 'we always spoke with a purpose' and she finds the laughter and the chatter – and the brevity of the prayers – alien on this, her first encounter with her aunt's family, although she comes to relax and enjoy the informality increasingly as her visit progresses. Auntie Ifeoma is obviously not as wealthy as the Achike family: the chairs do not match and neither does the tableware. It is obvious to the reader that despite the comparative poverty of her aunt's house, this is a far more loving family where the children do not fear to express opinions or to talk about 'trivial' matters such as the amount of coke in the bottle. It is also obvious from Kambili's cousins' comments that Auntie Ifeoma has taken special pains with the meal because they have visitors: Obiora says: 'I hope Kambili and Jaja come every day so we can eat like this. Chicken and soft drinks!' This special effort is something else which makes Kambili feel valued – a feeling neither she nor her mother or brother feel in their own home. In the following days at Auntie Ifeoma's Kambili discovers more about her aunt's poverty: she struggles to feed her children, there is only running water at certain times of the day and fuel for the car is in short supply. We see Ifeoma diluting powdered milk and commenting on the need to make it last all week. This makes Ifeoma's generosity all the more admirable and we feel the genuine warmth between the members of the family who occasionally squabble, showing more natural family relationships than those in Kambili's house where everyone is too scared of Papa to contradict him or engage in discussion.

Adichie uses the visit to Ifeoma's house to highlight the differences between the family relationships depicted here and family life in Kambili's house. Unlike Ifeoma's house with its mismatched chairs, odd plates and peeling wooden table, Papa's house is elegant and expensive. Tea is served from a 'china tea set with pink flowers on the edges' and there is a crystal salt shaker. However, despite this opulence, the mood is tense and Kambili cannot enjoy the food. She says: 'I was certain the soup was good, but I did not taste it, could not taste it. My tongue felt like paper.' The sharing of food, which is a sign of hospitality and generosity at Ifeoma's, becomes physically painful for Kambili because she knows that the rich meals and the luxuries her father provides are not freely given but demand the price of complete subservience to his religion, his authority and his impossibly high expectations of his children. His love is not unconditional but has a price, shown by the symbolism of the 'love sip' – a sip of tea given to his children from the pink flowered china. Kambili says: 'The tea was always too hot, always burned my tongue...But it didn't matter, because I knew that when the tea burned my tongue, it burned Papa's love into me.' Thus, Kambili comes to associate parental love with pain and mealtimes with prayers, discipline and silence. The difference between this and Ifeoma's poor but free and happy family is clear to see.

An important aspect of Kambili's family life is religion. Papa's strict adherence to the Christian faith and his desire to impress the church authorities, especially the white priests, is one of the factors that cause him to behave so tyrannically to his family. It is Jaja's refusal to go to communion that Kambili identifies as the start of the trouble at home, which leads ultimately to Papa's death and Jaja's imprisonment. It is significant that Mama's figurines are destroyed by the missal which Papa throws in his rage, perhaps symbolising the destruction of the home by religion. Auntie Ifeoma is also religious but her religion is more forgiving, with shorter prayers and the inclusion of liberal religious figures such as Father Amadi, who understands his followers' problems and tries to help them rather than judge them.

Adichie could be seen to use Papa's espousal of the strict, western Christian church and his reverence for all things associated with Europeans – he forbids his children to speak their native tongue or to see the Mmuo procession, a festival from their grandfather's religion at Ezi Icheke, and changes his own accent when talking to people in authority to 'sound more British' – to show the damage colonisation has done to the traditional way of life of Nigeria. Kambili's family is torn apart by her father's unreasonable behaviour, his violence and his religious zeal.

Kambili's family life is central to the ideas of growing up, religion and oppression in the novel. Adichie highlights these important aspects of Kambili's home life by presenting contrasting views of family life.

EXAMINER COMMENTARY

This response uses the extract well as a starting point, using details about Auntie Ifeoma's family life in the passage judiciously and then moving out from the extract to the rest of the novel. The student makes interesting points about the differences between Auntie Ifeoma's home and that of Papa and these contrasts show a good understanding of structure – the way Adichie contrasts Kambili's experiences in both places to highlight the unhappiness of her life at home. There is a clear understanding of the ideas in the novel and sound contextual understanding of contextual factors, especially religion and the imperialist background, both of which negatively impact on Papa. The use of details is excellent throughout – they are well chosen and the student analyses them in terms of both meaning and effects, making comments about the symbolism of the 'love sip' and the broken figurines. The emphasis is firmly on the writer's methods and intentions throughout.

This response would be placed towards the top of Level 6.

QUESTION 07

Kazuo Ishiguro: *Never Let Me Go*

0 7 This extract is the opening of the novel.

My name is Kathy H. I'm thirty-one years old, and I've been a carer now for over eleven years. That sounds long enough, I know, but actually they want me to go on for another eight months, until the end of this year. That'll make it almost twelve years now. Now I know my being a carer for so long isn't necessarily because they think I'm fantastic at what I do. There are some really good carers who've been told to stop after just two or three years. And I can think of one carer at least who went on for all of fourteen years despite being a waste of space. So I'm not trying to boast. But then I do know for a fact that they've been pleased with my work, and by and large, I have too. My donors have always tended to do much better than expected. Their recovery times have been impressive, and hardly any of them have been classified as 'agitated', even before fourth donation. Okay, maybe I *am* boasting now. But it means a lot to me, being able to do my work well, especially that bit about my donors staying 'calm'. I've developed a kind of instinct around donors. I know when to hang around and comfort them, when to leave them to themselves; when to listen to everything they have to say, and when just to shrug and tell them to snap out of it.

Anyway, I'm not making any big claims for myself. I know carers, working now, who are just as good and don't get half the credit. If you're one of them, I can understand how you might get resentful – about my bedsit, my car, and above all, the way I get to pick and choose who I look after. And I'm a Hailsham student – which is enough by itself sometimes to get people's backs up.

Starting with this extract, write about how Ishiguro presents Kathy as the narrator of *Never Let Me Go*.

[30 marks]

MARK SCHEME

Kazuo Ishiguro: *Never Let Me Go*

0 7 Starting with this extract write about how Ishiguro presents Kathy as the narrator of *Never Let Me Go*.

Indicative content

Examiners are encouraged to reward any valid interpretations. Answers might, however include some of the following:

AO1

- Kathy's role in the novel – student and then carer
- what happens to Kathy – experiences at Hailsham and friendships with Tommy and Ruth.

AO2

- Kathy's limited language and her limited response to her situation
- Kathy as an unreliable or limited narrator
- structure of the novel – structured around Kathy's memories
- Kathy's lack of discrimination about the incidents she includes and the importance she attaches to these.

AO3

Examiners are looking to award the student's proficiency in:

- presenting an argument
- organising their thoughts
- responding to the task
- communicating their ideas.

STUDENT A

This extract is from the start of *Never Let Me Go* so it's the first time we are introduced to the narrator of the novel, Kathy H. The extract is obviously very important because this is where the reader forms their first impressions of the character and we start to work out what she is like and what her situation is. In the extract Kathy says that she is a carer and she is proud of the fact that she is good at her job. She doesn't explain what sort of a carer she is and some of the things she says are confusing at first, for example when she talks about donations. We find out later that she cares for people who are donating their organs – a horrific thing to have to do but Kathy doesn't see it that way. To her it's just ordinary and she describes the process as if it's not that much to worry about. This is part of Ishiguro's narrative technique and he does it deliberately to show how Kathy has grown up with this idea and it's just an ordinary part of life to her. Later in the book she doesn't use words like 'die' and 'clones' to describe what is happening, instead Ishiguro uses euphemisms such as 'complete' and 'students' because this is what Kathy has been brought up to think. It's a horrible idea that some people are just born to be 'spare parts' for others who need organs if they are ill but Kathy doesn't think of it that way. Ishiguro does this on purpose – as a reader we know that Kathy and all her friends will die when they are still quite young and so does she but she's been brought up to accept it and this makes us feel sorry for her but also angry because she isn't trying to change this awful situation.

In the extract and sometimes in the rest of the novel, Kathy addresses the reader directly. She says: 'I can understand how you might get resentful' as if the reader is another clone like Kathy but one who didn't go to such a good school as Hailsham. This makes it sound like Kathy is talking to the reader all the way through which makes us understand her point of view more. Kathy thinks the reader (another student but from a different school) might be jealous of her bedsit and her car and the fact she went to Hailsham. This makes us feel sorry for her because what she has got are just ordinary things in our world which most people have got, if not better, and we are not jealous of her because she is going to die soon and there's nothing she can do about it. It also shows us that even though Kathy's life is pretty awful there are many people who are even worse off and we get an idea of how horrific the world Ishiguro creates in the novel is.

Kathy is very proud of the fact that she went to Hailsham and much of her narrative is spent describing her time at school. This is odd because the thing that is really interesting about her life is not who was her favourite teacher or where her friend Ruth got her pencil case from like Kathy thinks but the fact that people are used for 'spare part surgery' but Kathy doesn't seem that bothered about that aspect of her life. At Hailsham Kathy makes friends with Ruth and Tommy and we find out about their lives too until they both donate their organs and die. The three of them are very different: Tommy has temper tantrums and thinks he is worth nothing because he can't draw very well (drawing is important at Hailsham) and Ruth is a mean friend to Kathy sometimes – she steals Tommy from Kathy even though she doesn't really love him but in the end she sees how much she has hurt Kathy and helps Kathy and Tommy become a couple again although it's too late by that time because Tommy has already started to donate his organs.

This means we feel even more sorry for Kathy because she only has a short life and her one chance of happiness is taken away for no reason. I think Ishiguro presents these three characters as completely different people – one with a bad temper, one who is bossy and selfish and one who is too accepting of her situation – to make it more realistic; people are all different in our real world so Ishiguro has made the main characters all different to show us that it doesn't matter what sort of a person you are, you are only valued for your organs. It makes us think about what it would be like to be in that situation.

Kathy's first sentence: 'My name is Kathy H.' makes her sound like a child who doesn't know her second name. She then goes on to say that she is thirty-one and this makes us want to find out why she doesn't say her full name. We find out later that none of the clones have second names, just letters if there are more than two students with that name. This is one way that they are not treated like human beings.

Kathy is presented as the narrator of the novel and as the main character. I think she is quite annoying sometimes because we want her to tell us about what has happened to make this situation happen but she doesn't, she just hints about rebellions and protests and we never really find out much about the situation. But perhaps this is what Ishiguro intended – he wanted to show how an ordinary person would deal with being a clone and how even if you know you are going to live a very short life you are still more bothered about friends and boyfriends and not about how unfair it is you have to die so others can live.

EXAMINER COMMENTARY

This response has a clear understanding of the ideas in the novel and is sustained and consistent. There is a clear understanding of Ishiguro's methods and an understanding of the effects of these on the reader; it is a good attempt at dealing with the narrative voice, which is one of the most interesting techniques in the novel and is highlighted in the question which asks for a response to Kathy as narrator. A weaker response would just have offered a character study of Kathy. There are some details used to support points, especially from the extract, although the comments on the rest of the novel tend to be more general. At times, the response starts to become thoughtful – for example at the very end, when considering ideas, and throughout when grappling with the narrative.

This puts it into Level 5, although not at the top of this level.

QUESTION 10

Markus Zusak: *The Book Thief*

1 0

In this extract Max has recently arrived at Hans and Rosa Hubermann's house. This is one of his early conversations with Liesel.

During the nights, both Liesel Meminger and Max Vanderburg would go about their other similarity. In their separate rooms, they would dream their nightmares and wake up, one with a scream in drowning sheets, the other with a gasp for air next to a smoking fire.

Sometimes, when Liesel was reading with Papa close to three o'clock, they would both hear the waking moment of Max. 'He dreams like you' Papa would say, and on one occasion, stirred by the sound of Max's anxiety. Liesel decided to get out of bed. From listening to his story, she had a good idea what he saw in those dreams, if not the exact part of the story that paid him a visit each night.

She made her way quietly down the hallway and into the living and bedroom.

'Max?'

The whisper was soft, clouded in the throat of sleep.

At first there was no sound of reply, but he soon sat up and searched the darkness.

With Papa still in her room, Liesel sat on the other side of the fireplace to Max. Behind them, Mama loudly slept. She gave the snorer on the train a good run for her money.

The fire was now nothing but a funeral of smoke, dead and dying, simultaneous. On this particular morning, there were also voices.

THE SWAPPING OF NIGHTMARES

The Girl: 'Tell me. What do you see
when you dream like that?'

The Jew: '...I see myself turning round,
And waving goodbye.'

The Girl: 'I also have nightmares.'

The Jew: 'What do you see?'

The Girl: 'A train and my dead brother.'

The Jew: 'Your brother?'

The Girl: 'He died when I moved here, on the way.'

The Girl and the Jew, together: 'Ja – Yes.'

How does Zusak present different types of conflict in *The Book Thief*?

[30 marks]

MARK SCHEME

| | | |---|---| | 1 | 0 | |---|---| **Marcus Zusak: *The Book Thief***

How does Zusak present different types of conflict in *The Book Thief*?
[30 marks]

Indicative content

Examiners are encouraged to reward any valid interpretations. Answers might, however include some of the following:

AO1

- external conflict – war and the effect it has on the characters
- conflict between individuals – eg Hans and Liesel – and society
- internal conflicts, eg Max's conflicted ideas about his identity.

AO2

- use of death as narrator to highlight tragic effects of conflict
- use of Max's imaginary fights against Hitler to show his personal conflict
- presentation of characters – eg presentation of Hans to show his thoughtful consideration in the of face conflict.

AO3

Examiners are looking to award the student's proficiency in:

- presenting an argument
- organising their thoughts
- responding to the task
- communicating their ideas.

STUDENT A

There are many different types of conflict in *The Book Thief*. The main conflict is World War Two which is the background to the story and affects all the characters throughout the novel: some of them are killed in the war and others are made to fight in the war and everybody has their life changed in some way. The conflict of the war is shown to have an effect on Liesel from the very start of the story: her mother takes Liesel and her brother to a foster home – the Hubermanns – to try to give them a better chance of survival as Liesel's father is a communist, a member of a group who are disliked by the Nazis, and the family don't have enough food. Unfortunately Liesel's brother dies because of this conflict and Liesel is left alone. The military conflict has a huge effect on her and on all the inhabitants of Molching, where Liesel is taken. Later in the novel the Allies drop bombs on the town and Liesel and most of her neighbours have to take shelter in a basement, always worrying that they will be killed or their houses will be bombed. Liesel is especially anxious because, unknown to the neighbours, Hans and Rosa Hubermann are hiding a Jewish boy called Max in their basement and he has to stay there while the bombs drop. Towards the end of the novel there is another air raid and Hans and Rosa and Liesel's friend Rudy are all killed. This shows how destructive conflict can be and how devastating it can be for people who survived. Just like she survived when her brother died, Liesel survives this attack too and is distraught as she bends to kiss Rudy – a kiss he has been asking for all through the novel and she has refused him. Her sadness is shown when Zusak writes 'She did not say goodbye. She was incapable, and after a few more minutes at his side, she was able to tear herself from his side.' This shows how much the conflict of war has affected her. Earlier in the novel the reader is told that Rudy will die. The narrator of the novel is Death; he is an omniscient narrator and he tells us that Rudy has less than two years to live. This creates tension as we know that Rudy will die but we don't know exactly how or when so we are waiting for it and we know that he will not have a happy ending.

As well as the conflict of war between Germany and the Allies in the novel, there is also conflict within Germany between the Nazis and many German people and the Jews. This is shown on many occasions, for example when the Jewish prisoners are marched through the town and Hans helps an old man and gives him food. Both Hans and the old man are punished for this and shortly afterwards Hans is made to join the German army. The Hubermanns hide Max, who is Jewish, in the cellar and when Max first arrives Hans tells the story of how he came to know Max's father during the First World War and the debt he owes Max's father which he is paying off now. Zusak uses this to create a contrast to show how attitudes to Jewish people have changed in Germany. There wasn't any conflict between Jews and non-Jews in the First World War – Max's father is an ordinary German soldier and is accepted by the rest of the army. This is not the case now, though – there is a lot of hatred from the German army and some of the ordinary people towards Jews and this causes another of the main conflicts in the novel.

As well as these big, political conflicts, there are a number of smaller conflicts in the novel. For example, there is conflict between Liesel and her school friends when they find out that she cannot read and this leads to her stealing books and learning to read. There is also conflict between Liesel and Rosa when Liesel first arrives. Rosa calls her a 'filthy pig' because she does not want to have a bath. However, these conflicts are solved fairly soon, perhaps showing that once you get to know someone you like them more – something that cannot

really happen between two opposing sides in the army. Some of the characters in the novel also have internal conflicts. The Hubermanns want to keep Max safe but are worried and frightened because he might get caught and get them into trouble. Max solves this conflict for them when he decides to leave without telling anyone. Liesel steals books even though she knows this is wrong. This could cause some conflict for her character.

There are many different types of conflict in *The Book Thief* and Zusak shows that small conflicts can be solved but larger conflicts like war and racial and religious hatred are much harder to solve and these can have dreadful consequences for the people that get caught up in them.

EXAMINER COMMENTARY

This is quite a well-structured response which maintains a clear focus on the task throughout and covers a range of different types of conflict. The student deals with political conflict between countries, moving to large-scale conflict within Germany, then smaller conflicts within the town of Molching and then internal conflict. Not all of these are dealt with in the same amount of detail and the comments about internal conflict, in particular, are rather vague. It could be that timing was an issue at the end of the response.

It is difficult to write about this text without covering context as the historical context of the Second World War is central to the plot and is one of the main ideas in the novel. The student does start to make some clear comments about the writer's techniques, such as the foreshadowing created by Zusak using Death as an almost omniscient narrator and the structural point about the contrasting attitudes to Jews in WW1 and WW2.

This response would get a mark in the middle of Level 4.

It is clear and sustained but not really developed. It tends to be a little narrative and, at times, reads like a well-written list of different types of conflict.

QUESTION 11

Oxford AQA Short Stories Anthology

1 1 This is an extract from near the beginning of *Through the Tunnel*. Jerry and his mother have just arrived at the beach.

Next morning, when it was time for the routine of swimming and sunbathing, his mother said “Are you tired of the usual beach, Jerry? Would you like to go somewhere else?”

“Oh, no!” he said quickly, smiling at her out of that unfailing impulse of contrition – a sort of chivalry. Yet, walking down the path with her, he blurted out “I’d like to go and have a look at those rocks down there.”

She gave the idea her attention. It was a wild-looking place, and there was no one there; but she said, “Of course, Jerry. When you’ve had enough, come to the big beach. Or just go straight back to the villa, if you’d like”. She walked away, that bare arm, now slightly reddened from yesterday’s sun, swinging. And he almost ran after her again, feeling it unbearable that she should go by herself, but he did not.

She was thinking. Of course he’s old enough to be safe without me. Have I been keeping him too close? He mustn’t feel he ought to be with me. I must be careful.

He was an only child, eleven years old. She was a widow. She was determined to be neither possessive nor lacking in devotion. She went worrying off to her beach.

Starting with this extract, explore how writers present relationships between parents and children. Write about *Through the Tunnel* and **one** other story from the Oxford AQA Anthology.

[30 marks]

MARK SCHEME

0 5 Oxford AQA Short Stories Anthology

Starting with this extract, explore how writers present relationships between parents and children. Write about *Through the Tunnel* and one other story from the Oxford AQA Anthology.

[30 marks]

Indicative content

Examiners are encouraged to reward any valid interpretations. Answers might however, include some of the following:

AO1

- complicated relationship in *Through the Tunnel*: Jerry striving for independence but aware of mother's feelings
- embarrassment felt by Harold in *A Fly in the Ointment* and gulf between values and ideas of father/son
- love for daughter in *Sandpiper* but tinged by sadness that child will grow away from her distant relationships between boys in *The Destructors* and their parents.

AO2

- narrative viewpoint – shifting perspectives from mother to son in *Through the Tunnel*
- Harold's emotions shown through his thoughts in *A Fly in the Ointment*
- use of flashback in *Sandpiper*
- physical descriptions of parents/children.

AO3

Examiners are looking to award the student's proficiency in:

- presenting an argument
- organising their thoughts
- responding to the task
- communicating their ideas.

STUDENT A

Both *Through the Tunnel* and *The Fly in the Ointment* show relationships between parents and children who do not understand each other and who seem to have little in common. *Through the Tunnel* is about an eleven-year-old boy who feels restricted by his mother's care and *The Fly in the Ointment* is about a meeting between a bankrupt businessman and his grown-up son who does not share his father's obsession with money and success.

In *Through the Tunnel* Jerry, an only child, and his mother who is a widow are on holiday in a place which they have obviously visited many times before. Jerry thinks of the beach they habitually visit as 'the safe beach'. In the extract Lessing reveals the mother's thoughts: she is very conscious that she must not be over-protective towards her son and when he asks to go alone to a different part of the beach, a 'wild-looking place' she makes the decision to let him go, even though the thought of the dangers awaiting him leave her worried. Jerry soon meets a group of older, local boys and he watches them swim through a tunnel beneath a rock. He determines that he will do the same and for the next few days he practises, teaching himself to hold his breath and inspecting the opening of the tunnel. Swimming through the tunnel is a dangerous undertaking: Jerry realises that he will have to hold his breath for more than two minutes and that the narrowness of the tunnel means there is a very real danger of getting stuck. He hides these concerns from his mother, showing that he is now assuming control of his own decisions, and makes excuses when she comments on the nosebleeds caused by holding his breath. At the start of the story his mother controls him with her 'anxious apologetic smile', making him feel guilty enough to stay with her but as his determination to swim through the tunnel grows he becomes increasingly independent and pesters her to buy him some swimming goggles. Once she has done this he 'grabbed them from her hand...and was off, running down the steep path to the bay.' At the end of the story, when he has swum through the tunnel, he is much more independent and distant from his mother. He has no trouble in keeping the truth from her, replying with polite distance 'Oh, yes, thank you' when she asks if he has had a nice morning and Lessing does not mention the guilt which he feels at the start of the story when he wants to separate himself from his mother.

In this story the growing distance between parent and child could be seen as a natural stage of growing up and becoming more independent. Jerry wants to leave the 'safe beach' with its bright, childish colours of 'a speck of yellow under an umbrella that looked like a slice of orange peel' and instead travels to an area where 'rocks lay like discoloured monsters.' He admires the older, more skilful swimmers and wants to swim through the tunnel so he can be like them and, initially, to impress them, although this desire soon fades, leaving only the personal challenge of making the dive. The swim through the tunnel itself can be seen as a symbol of birth, with the tunnel representing the birth canal, a hazardous and arduous journey leading to a rebirth – Jerry is no longer childish when he emerges; he no longer wants to impress the older boys and he isn't interested in engaging in arguments with his mother.

He is politely distant as if he knows that his activities are nothing to do with his mother and that she must be protected from the worry that would be caused if she knew what he had done. Once he has undertaken the rite of passage which is swimming through the tunnel the relationship between Jerry and his mother is completely changed.

The Fly in the Ointment is also about a relationship between a parent and a child, in this case a father and his grown-up son. Harold and his father have obviously become estranged at the start of this story. Harold is visiting his father on his last day in the family business which he has been forced out from by 'quarrels, accusations and, at last, bankruptcy.' Harold is dreading seeing his father again and is obviously not at ease because he feels he cannot let his father see him arriving in a taxi, so he walks the last quarter of a mile to the factory. However, he obviously has some affection for his father because he says to himself 'I must see him. I must help him' and he resolves to put all the quarrels about money behind him. When the father is first introduced we feel sorry for him too; he has lost everything and he greets his son 'shyly...lowering his pleased blue eyes'. He talks about his life in business to Harold and ends by saying that 'money isn't necessary at all.' This seems to be completely different from all we have learnt about the old man earlier in the story: there are rumours that his business dealings have not been entirely honest and he is proud to be in the company of more successful businessmen even in bankruptcy. Pritchett says: 'A small man himself, he was proud to be bankrupt with the big ones. It made him feel rich.' His apparent change of heart about money then, makes the reader feel that he has learned something from his experiences and gives hope for a reconciliation between himself and his son, who really is unconcerned about money, working as a poorly paid lecturer. However, there are signs all through the story that the father has not changed at all. For example, Pritchett describes him as having 'two faces', a big outer face and, within it, a 'much smaller one, babyish, shrew, scared and hard.' This perhaps shows his ability to deceive, and therefore at the end of the story when he pounces on his son's mention of finding cash and his 'little face suddenly became dominant within the outer folds of skin like a fox looking out of a hole of clay' we are not entirely surprised by his greed and cunning. Harold had thought that his father had changed and that the relationship between the two of them might be mended but this proves not to be the case.

Both stories, then, show relationships between parents and children where one person conceals their true self from the other: Jerry in Through the Tunnel because he is growing up and trying to assert his independence and the father in The Fly in the Ointment because he wants sympathy from his son but is unable to conceal the true love of his life – money.

EXAMINER COMMENTARY

This response starts and ends by linking the two stories. There is no requirement to compare the two stories if students are writing about the Anthology; however, this is a sensible way of structuring the response and gives a sense of focus. The response is slightly unbalanced – it is more thorough and exploratory on Through the Tunnel. This is not a problem here, because both stories are dealt with adequately; however, it would be a problem if one story was only dealt with in a very brief or cursory manner. There is an exploration of themes in both stories and good use of details to support these ideas and the response is analytical in terms of writers' methods, exploring the symbolism in Through the Tunnel especially well. This response would be awarded a mark in Level 6.

QUESTION 14

William Shakespeare: *Julius Caesar*

1 4 At this point in the play Caesar is deciding whether to go to The Capitol.

CAESAR

The cause is in my will: I will not come;
That is enough to satisfy the Senate.
But for your private satisfaction,
Because I love you, I will let you know:
Calphurnia here, my wife, stays me at home.
She dreamt tonight she saw my statue,
Which, like a fountain with an hundred spouts,
Did run pure blood; and many lusty Romans
Came smiling, and did bathe their hands in it.
And these does she apply for warnings and portents
And evils imminent; and on her knee
Hath begged that I will stay at home today.

DECIUS

This dream is all amiss interpreted;
It was a vision fair and fortunate:
Your statue spouting blood in many pipes,
In which so many smiling Romans bathed,
Signifies that from you great Rome shall suck
Reviving blood, and that great men shall press
For tinctures, stains, relics, and cognizance.
This by Calphurnia's dream is signified.

Mark Anthony describes Brutus as 'the noblest Roman of them all.'
To what extent do you think that Shakespeare presents Brutus as noble in
Julius Caesar?

[30 marks]

MARK SCHEME

1 4 William Shakespeare: *Julius Caesar*

Mark Anthony describes Brutus as the 'noblest Roman of them all.'
To what extent do you think that Shakespeare presents Brutus as noble in *Julius Caesar*?

[30 marks]

Indicative content

Examiners are encouraged to reward any valid interpretations. Answers might, however include some of the following:

AO1

- Brutus' motives for joining in the assassination of Caesar
- his refusal to kill Antony and his decision to let Antony speak last at the funeral
- his prioritising of his public life over his private feelings
- his actions in the battle and his death
- perhaps some debate about whether he is noble or simply foolish.

AO2

- use of soliloquy to reveal Brutus' thoughts and feelings
- contrast with Cassius and the rest of the conspirators
- what other characters say about Brutus
- his language
- his possible role as tragic hero.

AO3

Examiners are looking to award the student's proficiency in:

- presenting an argument
- organising their thoughts
- responding to the task
- communicating their ideas.

STUDENT A

At the end of the play Brutus is described as ‘the noblest Roman of them all.’ This is true to a certain extent because Brutus does have good reasons for joining in the conspiracy and killing Caesar, but some people might think that he is at least partly responsible for the conspiracy going wrong and this would show that he is not completely noble.

At the start of the play Brutus feels uneasy about the fact that Caesar is getting more powerful even before Cassius has spoken to him. He says: ‘Vexed I am/Of late with passions of some difference,/Conceptions only proper to myself,’ which shows that he is worrying about Caesar and what to do about him. Brutus is Caesar’s friend and he doesn’t want to go against him but he also loves Rome and he is thinking that Caesar has got too powerful and maybe should be stopped. This shows that he is noble because he doesn’t want to hurt anyone and he wants the best for his country.

Cassius is clever and ambitious and he wants to overthrow Caesar so that he can get more power for himself. He is a part of a conspiracy to kill Caesar and he knows that if they get Brutus on board people will accept the conspiracy more easily because the people love Brutus and know he is a good man. He flatters Brutus to make him join the conspiracy, saying ‘What should be in that ‘Caesar’?/Why should that name be sounded more than yours. He is saying that Brutus is as good as Caesar. To make sure that Brutus joins the conspiracy he forges some letters from citizens to help persuade him.

Brutus doesn’t want to kill his friend Caesar but he does it because he thinks it is for the good of Rome. Once he has joined the conspirators he becomes a sort of leader who everybody else listens to which shows how much people respect him. Unfortunately, Cassius has got more common sense and the conspiracy would have gone better if people had listened to him. Brutus thinks he can convince the people of Rome that it was a good idea to kill Caesar who was becoming a tyrant. This is because he has done it for the right reasons so he thinks everyone will recognise that. He agrees to let Antony speak at Caesar’s funeral as he thinks this will show everyone he is reasonable and wants peace with everyone else (Cassius had wanted to kill Antony as well which would have been sensible but Brutus doesn’t want any more violence). When Antony speaks at the funeral he convinces the plebeians that Caesar has been wrongly murdered and the people turn against Brutus and the other conspirators. They don’t understand that Brutus had good motives and was doing it for them and unfortunately his good morals (not killing Antony) have made things worse.

Throughout all this Brutus does not tell his wife Portia what he is planning. This shows that he can easily separate his personal and his public life – personally

After the funeral Brutus and Cassius are hated and they have to gather an army to fight Caesar’s supporters. The two of them fall out because Brutus thinks that Cassius may have been taking bribes and getting money illegally. He is disappointed in his friend because this is partly why they assassinated Caesar – to stop corruption. This is another sign that Brutus is noble – he doesn’t want to abuse his power. They make friends again after a bit but then Cassius is killed. Brutus starts to feel guilty about what he has done and Caesar’s ghost appears to him. This is foreshadowing – it shows that Brutus will be killed because the ghost says it will see Brutus at Philippi ‘thou shalt see me at Philippi’ and this is where the battle is going to happen. Brutus fights on bravely, again showing he

is noble but he starts to lose the battle. He dies nobly, killing himself rather than allowing himself to be captured and he knows he is dying because of what he did to Caesar. He says this day must 'end the work the Ides of March begun.' Brutus is noble during most of the play. He does not want to kill Caesar but he does so because he thinks it is best for Rome, he is angry when Cassius raises money illegally and he dies bravely. However, his nobility is partly responsible for his downfall and the failure of the conspirators because he thinks everyone is as noble as he is. He doesn't realise that the rest of the conspirators are selfish and that Antony will take advantage of his nobility. Maybe nobility isn't always the best quality to have.

EXAMINER COMMENTARY

This response clearly explains the extent to which Brutus is noble, showing a good knowledge of the events of the play. There is a good range of references to illustrate comments and an understanding of some themes and ideas in the play. There is, however, very little about the writer's methods – a mention of foreshadowing – and while context does not have to be explicit, a little contextual information here would have helped.

The response is mostly Level 3 but knowledge of the play and the focus on the task just moves it into the bottom of Level 4.

QUESTION 15

William Shakespeare: *Macbeth*

1 4 At this point in the play Lady Macbeth is persuading Macbeth to kill Duncan.

MACBETH

We will proceed no further in this business.
He hath honoured me of late, and I have bought
Golden opinions from all sorts of people,
Which would be worn now in their newest gloss,
Not cast aside so soon.

LADY MACBETH

Was the hope drunk
Wherein you dressed yourself? Hath it slept since?
And wakes it now to look so green and pale
At what it did so freely? From this time
Such I account thy love. Art thou afeard
To be the same in thine own act and valour
As thou art in desire? Wouldst thou have that
Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life,
And live a coward in thine own esteem,
Letting 'I dare not' wait upon 'I would',
Like the poor cat i'th' adage?

Starting with this extract write about how Shakespeare presents the changing relationship between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth.

[30 marks]

MARK SCHEME

William Shakespeare: *Macbeth*

1 4

Starting with this extract, write about how Shakespeare presents the changing relationship between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth.

[30 marks]

Indicative content

Examiners are encouraged to reward any valid interpretations. Answers might, however include some of the following:

AO1

- the relationship between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth in this extract – Lady Macbeth’s power over her husband
- the shift in power after Duncan’s murder – Lady Macbeth has to ask to see her husband and she is not told of the plan to kill Banquo
- Lady Macbeth’s role in covering up for her husband during the banquet
- Macbeth’s reaction to his wife’s madness and subsequent death.

AO2

- use of shared dialogue at the start of the play to show closeness between them
- use of soliloquy to show thoughts about each other, eg Lady Macbeth at start and Macbeth at end of play
- increasing distance shown by the fact that they do not appear on stage together in later part of play.

AO3

Examiners are looking to award the student’s proficiency in:

- presenting an argument
- organising their thoughts
- responding to the task
- communicating their ideas.

STUDENT A

In Macbeth, the relationship between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth changes a great deal as the play goes on. At the start of the play they seem to have a loving relationship but by the end, Macbeth does not show any emotion when he hears of the death of his wife which shows he does not have the same strong feelings.

Macbeth appears in the play before his wife which gives us chance to get to know him first. Lady Macbeth first appears when she is reading the letter her husband sent her telling her about the witches and their prophesies. The fact that he writes her a letter shows that they are very close at the start of the play and he tells her everything. He calls her 'my dearest partner in greatness' which shows that not only does he love her but he also thinks of her as his partner – someone who is his equal and will share his good fortune which the witches promised.

When Macbeth and Lady Macbeth meet soon after this, they are very pleased to see each other and it is obvious that they are both thinking the same thing – that they should kill Duncan – even though they can't say it outright because someone might be listening and they would be executed for having such a treasonous conversation. This shows that they are very much in tune with each other and know what the other one is thinking. Lady Macbeth seems to be the dominant one in the relationship because she tells her husband to 'leave all the rest to me', meaning that she will sort out the details of the murder. She says that Macbeth must 'Look like the innocent flower,/ But be the serpent under it.' This imagery of false appearance is used a lot during the play and shows that both Macbeth and Lady Macbeth are good at concealing their true natures at the beginning of the play although they become much less able to do this as time goes on and guilt starts to eat away at them.

The extract is important because it shows the Macbeths having their first disagreement in the play and it also shows how manipulative Lady Macbeth is. Macbeth has had chance to think and he knows that killing Duncan would be terrible – not only might they get caught but he knows that Duncan is a good king and a good man. He tells Lady Macbeth 'We will proceed no further in this business.' This makes her really angry and she shouts at him, accusing him of being a coward and of raising her hopes when he had no intention of actually letting her become queen. Shakespeare uses a lot of rhetorical questions in her speech such as 'Was the hope drunk/Wherein you dressed yourself? Hath it slept since?' to show she is trying to make Macbeth think about his decision and change his mind. At the start of the play Macbeth is well known as a brave soldier so he can't stand being called a coward even though he knows it is both wrong and risky to kill Duncan. He says 'I dare do all that may become a man;/Who dares do more is none.' meaning that he is as brave as any man there is but killing the king would make him not a man but a monster. In the end though his wife persuades him, showing that she is the stronger one in the relationship at this point.

She is also strong when the murder has been committed. Macbeth is horrified by what he has done and he can't bear the thought of it. He thinks he will never be able to get rid of the blood, which is a symbol of his guilt, off his hands and when there is a knock on the door he is paralysed with guilt and fear. Lady Macbeth tells him to put his nightgown on, so that people will think they were in bed, and helps him wash the blood from his hands.

Later in the play Macbeth decides he has to kill Banquo because he knows all about the witches and could be suspicious of Macbeth. This time Macbeth does not involve his wife; he tells her to 'be innocent of the knowledge.' This shows that he is getting stronger and can act on his own now and that he and his wife are not as close as they used to be. After this murder Macbeth and Lady Macbeth have a banquet for all the Scottish thanes. Unfortunately Macbeth sees Banquo's ghost in the middle of the banquet; this could be a real ghost or it could be his guilty conscience again but he is so scared that he starts talking to it and telling it to 'Avaunt!' and almost gives the game away. Lady Macbeth has to come to the rescue again and say that Macbeth is not feeling well and it is an illness he has had since he was a child to try to cover up his actions. The guests are not convinced though and eventually she tells them to go, saying 'Stand not upon the order of your going' which means just leave as quick as you can. This is different from the start of this scene where people all have their own places to sit, and it shows the disruption the Macbeths are bringing to everywhere – not only the banquet but also the whole of Scotland.

From this point in the play onwards, Lady Macbeth's power diminishes. She has no part in the murder of Lady Macduff and her family and she is not seen in the play, showing how her influence over Macbeth decreases. Near the end of the play she goes mad, sleepwalking and talking in her sleep, giving away all their secrets. A Jacobean audience would have seen this as a sign of a guilty conscience. She has lost all her power by this time and soon after this Macbeth is told that she has died. He shows very little emotion, showing that the close bond they once shared is gone.

The relationship between Macbeth and his wife changes as the play goes on. From a strong start, where she is at least as powerful as he is, she gets weaker as Macbeth gets stronger, eventually killing herself through the guilt, which she seemed not to feel immediately after the murder of Duncan.

QUESTION 18

J.B Priestley: *An Inspector Calls*

1 8 In this extract, Gerald is giving Sheila an engagement ring.

SHEILA (*quiet and serious now*) All right then. I drink to you, Gerald.

For a moment they look at each other.

GERALD (*quietly*) Thank you. And I drink to you – and hope I can make you as happy as you deserve to be.

SHEILA (*trying to be light and easy*) You be careful – or I'll start weeping.

GERALD (*smiling*) Well, perhaps this will help to stop it.

(He produces a ring case.)

SHEILA (*excited*) Oh – Gerald – you've got it – is it the one you wanted me to have?

GERALD (*giving the case to her*) Yes – the very one.

SHEILA (*taking out the ring*) Oh – it's wonderful! Look – Mummy – isn't it a beauty? Oh – darling – *(She kisses GERALD hastily.)*

ERIC Steady the Buffs!

SHEILA (*who has put ring on, admiringly*) I think it's perfect. Now I really feel engaged.

MRS B. So you ought, darling. It's a lovely ring. Be careful with it.

SHEILA Careful! I'll never let it go out of my sight for an instant.

Starting with this extract, explore how Priestley presents the character of Sheila Birling in *An Inspector Calls*.

[30 marks]

1 8 J.B Priestley: *An Inspector Calls*

How does Priestley present ideas about social class in *An Inspector Calls*?

[30 marks]

Indicative content

Examiners are encouraged to reward any valid interpretations. Answers might, however include some of the following:

AO1

- successful middle class represented by Birlings
- story of Eva Smith shows how lower classes struggle to survive
- Mrs Birling's comments ('Girls of that class...' etc)
- importance of class to Birlings – shown by Gerald as prospective husband for Sheila
- snobbish attitude towards class – Gerald's parents not at engagement party.

AO2

- use of Inspector to deliver Priestley's views
- characterisation – Mr and Mrs Birling both presented negatively so audience is inclined to disagree with their views
- use of dramatic irony
- dramatic methods, eg stage directions to describe Birlings' house at start of play.

AO3

Examiners are looking to award the candidate's proficiency in:

- presenting an argument
- organising their thoughts
- responding to the task
- communicating their ideas.

STUDENT A

In *An Inspector Calls* Priestley wanted to convey important ideas about social class, capitalism and socialism. At the time he was writing there was a significant divide between people of different classes – which some people would say still exists today – and he wanted to show people that the upper classes, such as the Birling family, have a responsibility to the people they employ and the working class people they see as barely human. It is a didactic play, written with the intention of making people change the way they view others.

In the play, Mr Birling is a wealthy businessman who has made his money through his factory. Interestingly, Priestley never tells us what the factory manufactures, so Mr Birling becomes a symbol of all rich, exploitative factory owners. Mr Birling is a 'self-made man' who started from fairly lowly beginnings and is now rich. Mrs Birling is described as his 'social superior' and the slight difference in their class can be seen by her embarrassed reaction to his social solecism when he praises the cook for the meal. His wife says: 'Arthur, you're not supposed to say such things – and the stage directions say she speaks 'reproachfully''. This small detail shows how the upper classes, who have inherited wealth and who Mr Birling aspires to, such as Mrs Birling, see the lower classes, in this case the cook, as mere commodities, not as human beings who deserve praise for a job well done. Arthur's acknowledgement of the cook is seen as a sign that he does not quite fit in to the English upper classes. Arthur Birling is keen for his daughter to marry Gerald Croft because the Crofts are an old moneyed family – Gerald's parents are 'Sir George and Lady Croft' – and the alliance will help establish his place in society. Gerald's parents are not at the engagement party, perhaps a sign that they do not have the same enthusiasm for a match which will see their son marrying his social inferior. The main representative of the working classes in the play is Eva Smith, who starts as a worker in Birling's factory. Eva is one of the leaders of a strike in the factory which is presented sympathetically by Priestley. The workers want twenty-five shillings a week, rather than twenty-two and sixpence. When questioned by the Inspector, Birling is unapologetic about the fact that he had no sympathy for the strikers and did not even consider their demands: 'We were paying the usual rates and if they didn't like those rates, they could go and work somewhere else.' The strike is broken and, as one of the ringleaders, Eva is sacked. It is significant that later, when questioned by the Inspector, Birling does not even remember who Eva Smith is at first and he is certainly unwilling to take responsibility for anything that happened to her later.

The differences between the classes are also shown by Sheila's treatment of Eva. After leaving the factory, Eva gets a job at Milwards, a dress shop frequented by Mrs Birling and Sheila. Eva is sacked from the shop when she catches her smiling in the mirror and thinks that she is laughing at her. Earlier in the play, before the Inspector arrives, Mr Birling talks about the importance of clothes to women. He says: 'clothes mean something quite different to a woman. Not just something to wear – and not only something to make 'em look prettier – but – well, a sort of sign or token of their self-respect.'

When Eva holds the dress against herself it suits her much better than it suits Sheila when she tries it on, and this is what makes Sheila lose her temper and threaten to take the family's business away unless Eva is sacked. Birling could be saying that the differences between these two women, who are of very different classes, are superficial: if dressed in expensive clothes like Sheila, Eva

is at least her equal, possibly her better. The power of the upper classes – and the powerlessness of the lower classes – is shown by the fact that Sheila can just demand that Eva is dismissed.

Eva Smith – with her universal name – becomes a symbol of all members of the working class who are oppressed and exploited in different ways by the upper classes. Mr Birling and Sheila show how this is done through employment and Gerald, Eric and Mrs Birling show how these people are exploited in other ways. After she leaves Milwards, Eva becomes a prostitute, supported by Gerald for as long as it is convenient to him. Perhaps Priestley is showing here that the upper classes support the working class, but only if they get something in return and only when it suits them to do so. Eric then gets Eva pregnant and steals money from his father's factory to try to support her. Significantly, it is the money – and the possible scandal which might follow if Eric's theft is discovered – which is more important to Mr Birling than the fate of Eva, again showing the lack of concern for people of a lower class.

Mrs Birling shows the hypocrisy of the upper classes. She is a member of a charity committee who Eva appeals to for financial help when she finds out she is pregnant. Mrs Birling refuses her request without feeling any pity, dismissing her as 'girls of that class', again as if she is not quite human. She wants the father of the child to take responsibility, rejecting the idea that society has a responsibility to offer help to all in need. Of course, when she finds out her son is the father of Eva's child, she is distraught – although she quickly finds consolation in the idea that the whole thing may have been a hoax and once the immediate threat of discovery seems to be over she, like Mr Birling, reject any moral lesson they might have started to learn about the fundamental equality of all human beings.

Just before the inspector arrives, Mr Birling talks to Gerald and Eric about personal responsibility; 'a man has to make his own way – has to look after himself – and his family too, of course, when he has one' and rejects the ideas of community put forward by 'these Bernard Shaws and H G Wellses', writers who Priestley admired and whose political ideas he shared. Just before he leaves, the Inspector clearly underlines the message of the play, which is the opposite of Birling's view, for the audience. 'There are millions and millions and millions of Eva Smiths and John Smiths still left with us, with their lives, their hopes and fears, their suffering and chance of happiness, all intertwined with our lives, and what we think and say and do.' This is what Priestley hoped that the upper class audience members would learn from his play.

QUESTION 20

Arthur Miller: *The Crucible*

1 8 This extract is taken from near the beginning of the play when some of the inhabitants of Salem have heard the news of Betty's 'illness'. They have gathered at the home of Reverend Parris.

PARRIS: Mr Corey, you will look far for a man of my kind at sixty pound a year! I am not used to this poverty; I left a thrifty business in the Barbados to serve the Lord. I do not fathom it, why am I persecuted here? I cannot offer one proposition but there be a howling riot of argument. I have often wondered if the Devil be in it somewhere; I cannot understand you people otherwise.

PROCTOR: Mr Parris, you are the first minister ever did demand the deed to this house –

PARRIS: Man! Don't a minister deserve a house to live in?

PROCTOR: To live in, yes. But to ask ownership is like you shall own the meeting house itself; the last meeting I were at you spoke so long on deeds and mortgages I thought it were an auction.

PARRIS: I want a mark of confidence, is all! I am your third preacher in seven years. I do not wish to be put out like the cat whenever some majority feels the whim. You people seem not to comprehend that a minister is the Lord's man in the parish; a minister is not to be so lightly crossed and contradicted –

PUTNAM: Aye!

PARRIS: There is either obedience or the church will burn like Hell is burning!

PROCTOR: Can you speak one minute without we land in Hell again? I am sick of Hell!

PARRIS: It is not for you to say what is good for you to hear!

PROCTOR: I may speak my heart, I think!

PARRIS [*in a fury*]: What, are we Quakers? We are not Quakers here yet, Mr Proctor. And you may tell that to your followers!

PROCTOR: My followers!

PARRIS [*now he's out with it*]: There is a party in this church. I am not blind; there is a faction and a party.

PROCTOR: Against you?

PUTNAM: Against him and all authority!

PROCTOR: Why, then I must find it and join it.

How does Miller present children and young people in *The Crucible*?

[30 marks]

MARK SCHEME

2 0 Arthur Miller: *The Crucible*

How does Miller present children and young people in *The Crucible*?
[30 marks]

Indicative content

Examiners are encouraged to reward any valid interpretations. Answers might, however, include some of the following:

AO1

- girls as a group – singing and dancing in the woods
- what Abigail does in the play
- other individuals, eg Mary Warren; Betty; Mercy
- possible effects of context (religious oppression and harsh conditions) on the behaviour of young people.

AO2

- use of stage directions to describe children and young people
- dramatic action such as Betty's 'illness' and her recovery
- language used, eg by Abigail to dominate others
- dramatic effectiveness of girls acting in unison in court scene.

AO3

Examiners are looking to award the student's proficiency in:

- presenting an argument
- organising their thoughts
- responding to the task
- communicating their ideas.

STUDENT A

The *Crucible* is a play based on true events about an outbreak of witchcraft in Salem. In the play a group of young girls, led by Abigail, say they can detect witches and in the courtroom the girls are given the power to condemn people from the town as witches.

The play starts with Abigail's cousin, Betty, who is ten, apparently bewitched. We find out that she, and the other girls, have been dancing in the woods and perhaps trying to conjure spirits. This would have been considered a sinful thing to do because the people in Salem were very religious and believed the Devil could possess you if you did such things. Betty's illness causes an uproar in the town and her father, Reverend Parris, sends for Reverend Hale, who is an expert in witchcraft. When he arrives, to get herself out of trouble (because she is only pretending to be bewitched) Betty shouts out the names of neighbours such as 'I saw Martha Bellows with the Devil!' and Abigail joins in. This shows that children and young people did not have very much power in those days and Abigail sees her chance of being the centre of attention and of getting her own back on people who have treated her badly and takes it.

Abigail is a clever and cruel girl who is described in the stage directions as having an 'endless capacity for dissembling'. This means she is good at pretending and a good actress who can deceive people when she wants to. She sees an opportunity to get some power over the adults in Salem, especially Elizabeth Proctor. Abigail has been having an affair with John Proctor, who is Elizabeth's husband but he ended it which means that Abigail is jealous and hates Elizabeth. She pretends that Elizabeth's spirit stuck a needle in her side and everyone believes her so Elizabeth is arrested for witchcraft. This shows that children and young people can be vindictive and evil. When Abigail is found out she steals her uncle's money and runs away but a lot of damage has been done by then and even after she runs away some people are still hanged for being witches.

One of the other important young people in the play is Mary Warren. She is John and Elizabeth Proctor's servant and she is also a friend of Abigail and one of the girls who accuses people of witchcraft. She is quite a weak girl and even though she knows that Abigail is lying and just wants power, she finds it hard to go against her. When Elizabeth is arrested John says that Mary must go to court and say that she gave her the 'poppet' with the needle stuck in it which Abigail says is how she got stabbed in the side. He says: 'You're coming to the court with me, Mary. You will tell it in the court.' Mary says that she can't because Abigail and the other girls will turn on her. This is proof that the girls are lying and that young people – especially Abigail – are presented in a bad way in *The Crucible*. When she does go to the courtroom Mary starts off on John's side but the power of the other girls is too much for her and she turns back to Abigail who is a manipulative bully and the weak Mary hasn't got the courage to go against her.

Young people in *The Crucible* are presented as having quite a lot of power, especially Abigail, who is presented as clever. Perhaps the reason she is like this is because of the violent society she grew up in. She says 'I saw Indians smash my dear parents' heads on the pillow next to mine' which shows she has experienced extreme violence and she threatens the other girls, saying 'I will come to you in the black of some terrible night and I will bring a pointy reckoning which will shudder you.' She doesn't say exactly what she will do but we get the idea it will be very violent. This shows that young people are not always sweet and innocent, like Abigail pretends to be.

EXAMINER COMMENTARY

This is an explained response. It would have benefitted from a little more planning – the section about Abigail's past at the end seems something of an afterthought. It tends to deal with 'children and young people' individually, so there is a section on Abigail, a section on Mary Warren and a little about Betty, rather than thinking about young people in a more conceptualised way. If the student had developed the idea of young people being powerless in Salem society, grabbing onto power when they see the opportunity, this could have been a way to do this. There is some relevant contextual material. However, the response contains very little about Miller's methods – there is a reference to the stage directions, showing an awareness that the text is a play, but otherwise the student writes about the characters as if they are real people. This has an effect on the mark awarded. There are some specific textual references in the form of quotations and some more general references.

The response is awarded a mark towards the bottom of Level 3.

QUESTION 21

Lorraine Hansberry: *A Raisin in the Sun*

2 1

In this extract George arrives to take Beneatha to the theatre. Beneatha is wearing traditional Nigerian clothes.

GEORGE (to **BENEATHA**) Look, honey, we're going to the theatre – we're not going to be *in* it ... so go change, huh?

RUTH You expect this boy to go out with you looking like that?

BENEATHA *looks at him and slowly, ceremoniously, lifts her hands and pulls off the headdress. Her hair is close-cropped and unstraightened.*

GEORGE *freezes mid-sentence and RUTH's eyes all but fall out of her head.*

GEORGE What in the name of –

RUTH (*touching BENEATHA's hair*) Girl, you done lost your natural mind!? Look at your head!

GEORGE What have you done to your head – I mean your hair?

BENEATHA Nothing – except cut it off.

RUTH You expect this boy to go out with you looking like that?!

BENEATHA (*looking at GEORGE*) That's up to George. If he's ashamed of his heritage –

GEORGE Oh, don't be so proud of yourself, Bennie – just because you look eccentric.

BENEATHA How can something that's natural be eccentric?

GEORGE That's what being eccentric means – being natural. Get dressed.

BENEATHA I don't like that, George.

RUTH Why must you and your brother make an argument out of everything people say?

BENEATHA Because I hate assimilationist Negroes!

RUTH Will somebody please tell me what assimila- whoever means!

GEORGE Oh, it's just a college girl's way of calling people Uncle Toms. But that isn't what it means at all.

RUTH Well, what does it mean?

BENEATHA (*cutting GEORGE off and staring at him as she replies to*

RUTH) It means someone who is willing to give up his own culture and submerge himself completely in the dominant, and in this case, *oppressive, culture!*

Starting with this extract, explore how Hansberry presents Beneatha's struggle to find her identity.

[30 marks]

MARK SCHEME

| | | |---|---| | 2 | 1 | |---|---| Lorraine Hansberry: *A Raisin in the Sun*

Starting with this extract, explore how Hansberry presents Beneatha's struggle to find her identity.

[30 marks]

Indicative content

Examiners are encouraged to reward any valid interpretations. Answers might, however include some of the following:

AO1

- Beneatha's adoption of traditional dress and hairstyle in this extract
- Beneatha's very different boyfriends – Joseph and George
- Beneatha's education
- Beneatha's determination to study medicine.

AO2

- dramatic effect of the revelation of her hairstyle and use of costume
- Beneatha's 'college girl' language
- use of contrast to present two different futures for Beneatha in the shape of George and Joseph
- use of traditional singing and dancing.

AO3

Examiners are looking to award the student's proficiency in:

- presenting an argument
- organising their thoughts
- responding to the task
- communicating their ideas.

STUDENT A

Beneatha is Mama's daughter in *A Raisin in the Sun*. She is twenty years old and she is training to be a doctor. She is an educated black woman, idealistic and intelligent and throughout the play she searches for her identity as a woman of colour in a world where white people have the upper hand.

In the play Beneatha goes out with two men, George Murchison, a wealthy African-American, who is approved of by the rest of Beneatha's family, and Joseph Asagai, a poor student from Nigeria who is politically aware and proud of his African heritage. These two men represent the conflict Beneatha faces in the play – to what extent should she submit to white culture and be assimilated into American society.

The extract occurs in the middle of the play when Beneatha is feeling less attracted to George because of his assimilationist views and concern with material possessions. Asagai has given Beneatha a nickname – 'Alaiyo' which means 'One For Whom Bread Is Not Enough' and she is flattered by the implication that she is too intelligent to simply care about possessions. When George arrives to take her to the theatre – a traditionally Western, which would be a way of black people conforming to white middle-class norms – Beneatha is wearing traditional Nigerian dress. Rather than accept this, George insists that she changes into more conventional Western clothing before they leave. He says: 'Look, honey, we're going to the theatre – we're not going to be *in* it ... so go change, huh?' suggesting her clothes are like a theatrical costume, not clothes that people might actually wear. This symbolises George's view of Beneatha's Nigerian identity as something which is false, rather than something which is central to her identity which is how Asagai sees it and how Beneatha comes to think by the end of the play. Significantly, the stage directions describe George as wearing a 'carefully casual tweed sports jacket over cashmere V-necked sweater over soft eyelet shirt and tie, and soft slacks, finished off with white buckskin shoes', a style Walter identifies as being worn by all the college boys. This shows his views are completely opposite to those of Beneatha: he adopts the dominant, fashionable style with ease.

When Beneatha removes her headdress to reveal her hair which is 'close-cropped and unstraightened', traditionally Nigerian in style, not emulating the straight, long styles which are fashionable in America, George calls her eccentric and Ruth says 'You expect this boy to go out with you looking like that', showing that even Beneatha's family have been assimilated to such an extent that they think their own heritage and culture is unattractive and inferior. The disagreement becomes overt with Beneatha telling George and her family that she is not prepared to be an assimilationist, someone who 'is willing to give up his own culture and submerge himself entirely in the dominant and, in this case, *oppressive*, culture.'

Beneatha becomes closer to Asagai as the play progresses, symbolising her moving away from George and the fake American identity her represents. Asagai criticises her, saying she is not as independent as she thinks as her dreams of becoming a medical student are founded on the insurance money from her father and her brother's dodgy investment schemes. However, his criticism is not like that of George; Asagai criticises her to help her improve and to find her own identity and by the end of the play he asks Beneatha to return to Nigeria with him and become a doctor.

Although the audience do not find out whether she actually does this, the dramatic arc of the play, with Beneatha becoming more and more aware of her heritage and her cultural roots, suggests that this is what will happen. Throughout the play, then, Beneatha changes from being a slightly selfish young woman who only cares about herself and her relationships, to one who has a social conscience and cares about her cultural identity and her heritage. Hansberry shows this by the two relationships she has – with George, who represents black people who want to become integrated into American society, even if this means giving up their own culture and forgetting their heritage, and Asagai, who is idealistic and cares about his identity and his Nigerian past.

FURTHER GUIDANCE AND CONTACTS

You can contact the subject team directly at english@oxfordaqaexams.org.uk

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