

OXFORD

INTERNATIONAL
AQA EXAMINATIONS

INTERNATIONAL GCSE

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

(9270)

Paper 1: Section A Literary non-fiction

Further specimen questions and exemplar
student responses

For teaching from September 2016 onwards

For GCSE exams in May/June 2018 onwards

This guide includes some further exemplar 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.

**FURTHER SPECIMEN QUESTIONS:
PAPER 1 SECTION A LITERARY NON-FICTION**

In Section A students will be given a single text for close study. The text will be divided into sections with questions. At least one question will relate to the whole text. The text will be literary non-fiction eg autobiography, biography, letters, memoir and travel/adventure writing. 40 marks are available in total for this section.

Section A

Answer **all** questions in this section.

You are advised to spend about one hour on this section.

The writer, Helen Macdonald trains hawks. In this extract she describes a time when she was collecting a goshawk to train.

Read **lines 01 to 04** and answer **Question 1**.

A man walked slowly towards me across a Scottish quayside, carrying two enormous cardboard boxes like a couple of oversized suitcases. Strangely alien suitcases that didn't seem to obey the laws of physics, because as he walked they moved unpredictably, in concert neither with his steps nor with gravity.

QUESTION 1

0 1

What is unusual about the boxes?

[5 marks]

Now read **lines 05 to 18** and answer **Question 2**.

Whatever is in them is moving, I thought with a little thump of my heart. He set the boxes down, ran his hand through his hair. 'I'm meeting another falconer here in a bit. He's having the younger bird. Yours is the older. Bigger too,' he said. 'So.' He ran his hand through his hair again, exposing a long talon scratch across his wrist, angry at its edges and scurfed with dried blood. 'We'll check the ring numbers against the Article 10s,' he explained, pulling a sheaf of yellow paper from the rucksack and unfolding two of the official forms that accompany captive-bred rare birds throughout their lives. 'Don't want you going home with the wrong bird.'

We noted the numbers. We stared down at the boxes, at their parcel-tape handles, their doors of thin plywood and hinges of carefully tied string. Then he knelt on the concrete, untied a hinge on the smaller box and squinted into its dark interior. A sudden *thump* of feathered shoulders and the box shook as if someone had punched it, hard, from within. 'She's got her hood off,' he said, and frowned. That light, leather hood was to keep the hawk from fearful sights. Like us.

QUESTION 2

0 2

What does the writer suggest about the content of the boxes?

[6 marks]

Now read **lines 19 to 37** and answer **Question 3**.

Another hinge untied. Concentration. Infinite caution. Daylight irrigating the box. 19
Scratching talons, another thump. And another. Thump. The air turned syrupy, slow, 20
flecked with dust. The last few seconds before a battle. And with the last bow pulled
free, he reached inside, and amidst a whirring, chaotic clatter of wings and feet and
talons and a high-pitched twittering and it's all happening at once, the man pulls an
enormous hawk out of the box and in a strange coincidence of world and deed a great
flood of sunlight drenches us and everything is brilliance and fury. The hawk's wings, 25
barred and beating, the sharp fingers of her dark-tipped primaries cutting the air, her
feathers raised like scattered quills. Two enormous eyes. My heart jumps sideways.
She is a conjuring trick. A reptile. A fallen angel. Something bright and distant, like
gold falling through water. A broken puppet of wings, legs and light-splashed feathers.
For one awful, long moment she is hanging head-downward, wings open, like a turkey 30
in a butcher's shop, only her head is turned right-way-up and she is seeing more than
she has ever seen before in her whole short life. Her world was an aviary no larger
than a living room. Then it was a box. But now it is this, and she can see everything:
the point-source glitter on the waves, a diving cormorant a hundred yards out; pigment
flakes under wax on the lines of parked cars; far hills and the heather on them and 35
miles and miles of sky where the sun spreads on dust and water. Everything startling
and new-stamped on her entirely astonished brain. 37

QUESTION 3

0 3

How does the writer use language to describe the hawk?

[9 marks]

Now read **lines 38 to 49** and answer **Question 4**.

The man was perfectly calm. He gathered up the hawk in one practised movement, 38
folding her wings, anchoring her broad feathered back against his chest, gripping her
scaled yellow legs in one hand. 'Let's get that hood back on,' he said tautly. There 40
was concern in his face. It was born of care. This hawk had been hatched in an
incubator, and for the first few days of her life this man had fed her with scraps of
meat held in a pair of tweezers, waiting patiently for the lumpen, fluffy chick to notice
the food and eat. I grabbed the hood from the box and turned to the hawk. Her beak
was open, her hackles raised; her wild eyes were the colour of sun on white paper, 45
and they stared because the whole world had fallen into them at once. *One, two,*
three. I tucked the hood over her head. There was a brief intimation of a thin, angular
skull under her feathers, of an alien brain fizzing and fusing with terror, then I drew the
braces closed. We checked the ring numbers against the form. 49

QUESTION 4

0 4

Suggest reasons to explain why the hawk behaves the way she does.

[4 marks]

Now read the rest of the passage and answer **Question 5** and **6**.

It was the wrong bird. This was the younger one. This was not my hawk. So we put her back and opened the other box, which was meant to hold the larger, older bird. And dear God, it did. Everything about this second hawk was different. She came out like a Victorian melodrama: a sort of madwoman in the attack. She was smokier and darker and much, much bigger, and instead of twittering, she wailed; great, awful gouts of sound like a thing in pain, and the sound was unbearable. *This is my hawk*, I was telling myself and it was all I could do to breathe. She too was bareheaded, and I grabbed the hood from the box as before. But as I brought it up to her face I looked into her eyes and saw something blank and crazy in her stare. Some madness from a distant country. I didn't recognise her. *This isn't my hawk*. The hood was on, the ring numbers checked, the bird back in the box, the yellow form folded, the money exchanged, and all I could think was, 'But this isn't my hawk.' Slow panic. I knew what I had to say, and it was a monstrous breach of etiquette. 'This is really awkward,' I began. 'But I really liked the first one. Do you think there's any chance I could take that one instead?' I tailed off. His eyebrows were raised. I started again, saying stupider things, 'I'm sure the other falconer would like the larger bird? She's more beautiful than the first one, isn't she? I know this is out of order, but I... Could I? Would it be all right, do you think?' And on and on, a desperate, crazy barrage of incoherent appeals.

I'm sure nothing I said persuaded him more than the look on my face as I said it. A tall, white-faced woman with wind-wrecked hair and exhausted eyes was pleading with him on a quayside. Looking at me he must have sensed that my stuttered request wasn't a simple one. There was a moment of total silence.

'All right,' he said. And then, because he didn't see me believe him, 'Yes. Yes, I'm sure that'll be OK.'

Now think about the **whole** passage.

QUESTION 5

0 5

Explain why the writer asks to take the first bird rather than the second one.

[9 marks]

QUESTION 6

0 6

What have you learnt about the man who brings the hawks?

[9 marks]

AO1 READING

- R1 Read and understand texts, selecting and utilising material appropriate to purpose.
- R2 Collate and synthesise detail from different one or more sources, making cross-references and comparisons as appropriate.
- R3 Develop and sustain interpretations of writers' ideas and perspectives.
- R4 Explain and evaluate how writers use linguistic, grammatical, structural and presentational features to achieve effects and engage and influence the reader.

MARK SCHEME, EXEMPLAR STUDENT RESPONSES WITH EXAMINER COMMENTARY:

QUESTION 1

0 1

What is unusual about the boxes?

[5 marks]

Examiners must reward any valid interpretations. Answers might, however, include some of the examples given for each question.

R1: Read and understand texts, selecting and utilising material appropriate to purpose.

Marks are awarded for appropriate selection of detail and consideration of it.

0 mark: nothing relevant.

Award 1 mark for answers which **offer isolated literal detail(s) and/or simple comment**; for example:

- They are enormous.
- They are cardboard.

Award 2 marks for answers which **offer a small range of detail, possibly with some relevant comment**, for example:

- They look like oversized suitcases.
- They are 'alien' looking so do not appear normal.
- They are moving 'unpredictably' so something must be in them.

Award 3 marks for answers which offer **a greater range of detail and/or some developed comment**, for example:

- The writer describes the boxes as 'strangely alien', which implies that they appear to look different to normal boxes, perhaps because of their large size.
- The writer also states that the boxes did not seem to 'obey the laws of physics', suggesting that they are moving in a strange manner and appear to have something inside which is making them move.

STUDENT A

Isolated detail. Simple comment (R1).

The boxes are unusual because they are 'strangely alien' and aliens are unusual.

EXAMINER COMMENTARY

This student has selected one isolated detail and offered a simple comment in relation to the question.

1 mark awarded

STUDENT B

Detail (R1).

Detail (R1).

Begins to make relevant comment.

The boxes seem to be unusual because they are quite large in size and look like 'oversized suitcases'. They are also moving in a strange way as the writer says they moved 'unpredictably', which makes them seem unusual because they seem 'to have a mind of their own'.

EXAMINER COMMENTARY

This student has used more range of detail to support their response. There is some comment to explain why the boxes are unusual in appearance. The extra detail in this student's response moves it into band 2.

2 marks awarded

STUDENT C

Detail (R1).

Detail used to support comment (R1).

Developed comment.

As soon as the writer begins to describe the boxes they appear very unusual. She uses the adjective 'alien' to suggest that they look out of place and oddly shaped for cardboard boxes. This sense of strangeness is then continued as she comments on the way they move 'unpredictably' as if they do not 'obey the laws of physics'. These descriptions both suggest 'the boxes are abnormal and whatever is contained within them is as strange and unpredictable as their appearance'.

EXAMINER COMMENTARY

This student uses a greater range of detail, drawing together relevant evidence from across the lines. The student uses this detail to develop comment relating to the appearance of the boxes. This response achieves in band 3.

3 marks awarded.

QUESTION 2

0 2

What does the writer suggest about the content of the boxes?

[6 marks]

Examiners must reward any valid interpretations. Answers might, however, include some of the examples given for each question.

AO1

R1: Read and understand texts, selecting and utilising material appropriate to purpose.

R3: Develop and sustain interpretations of writers' ideas and perspectives.

Marks are awarded for appropriate selection of detail and consideration of it. **Students may validly refer to detail from the first paragraph in support of this answer.**

0 mark: nothing relevant.

Award 1-2 mark for answers which **offer isolated literal detail(s) and/or unsupported assertion; may relate to boxes rather than content;** for example:

- The thing inside is big.
- Whatever is in the box is moving.

Award 3-4 marks for answers which **use detail to develop some relevant comment,** for example:

- The writer suggests there could be something aggressive in the boxes as the man has a scratch on his wrist.
- The sudden thump in the box suggests the bird might be frightened or angry.

Award 5-6 marks for answers which **offer developed relevant comment on detail and/or infer meaning,** for example:

- The writer's description of the boxes as 'enormous' and 'strangely alien' suggests that these birds are not just large but unlike anything that has been seen before. There is also the possibility that they might be dangerous as the man has a 'long talon scratch' on his wrist.
- The writer suggests that the birds are very frightened. They've been kept captive in dark, plywood boxes tied with string and one of the birds is 'punching' the box with its shoulders in a desperate attempt to get out.

STUDENT A

Isolated detail used in a literal way (R1).

The writer says that the thing inside the box is 'moving'. She also says that whatever is in the box 'punched it hard' from inside the box.

EXAMINER COMMENTARY

This student has selected relevant literal details from the text and made simple comments in relation to the question.

2 marks awarded.

STUDENT B

Detail used to support comment (R1).

Attempts to comment on what the writer is doing here (R3).

Detail used to support comment (R1).

The writer used the words enormous and oversized to describe the box. In the text the writer said 'carrying two enormous cardboard boxes like a couple of oversized suitcases'. The writer has made us aware that these boxes are holding some content, he made us aware by using adjectives. In the text the writer also said 'a sudden thump of feathered shoulders and the box shook as if someone had punched it.' This shows us that the items in the boxes are very strong and heavy.

EXAMINER COMMENTARY

This student has selected relevant details from the text and used it to begin to comment on what the writer is suggesting. Had the comments been more developed it could have achieved a 4/5. As the student just begins to comment the response falls at the bottom of band 2.

3 marks awarded.

STUDENT C

Relevant detail to support comment (R1).

Uses the detail to comment on what is suggested by the supporting detail (R3).

Relevant detail to support comment (R1).

Again, use of detail to support comment on what is implied by the writer. There is some evidence here of the student beginning to infer (R3).

The writer suggests that what is inside the boxes are dangerous, violent and angry. Evidence of this can be found in line 8 'exposing a long talon scratch across his wrist.' This tells us that when the bird handler was trying to get the creature, at some point, it attacked him in self defence or out of aggressiveness.

Also, the writer suggests that the creature inside the box is trying to escape. This is evidenced in line 14, 'A sudden thump of feathered shoulder and ...' This is implying that the creature is afraid of dark, confined spaces and it is hitting the walls of the boxes in an attempt to free itself, even if it means inflicting self harm by doing it repeatedly.

EXAMINER COMMENTARY

This student's use of detail is well focused on the question and they offer more detailed comments on what is being implied by the writer. The student also begins to infer some meaning based on their chosen detail, meaning this answer just begins to move into the upper band. It achieves a mark of 5, at the bottom of band 3.

5 marks awarded.

STUDENT D

The writer suggests on these lines that there is something particularly aggressive and there is some form of imminent danger within the boxes. The quote 'a sudden thump of feathered shoulders' suggests that this particular bird is rather restless and that it seems to have a blood lust for him as it wants to break free. In addition to this you can also infer that whatever is inside the suit cases is completely unknown to him as the suitcase seems to have a uncontrollable mind of its own. He describes the suitcases earlier as 'strangely alien' and 'didn't seem to obey the laws of physics'. This in turn suggests that the contents of the boxes is perhaps something 'weird and abnormal' that shouldn't belong on earth and so is rather imposing and intimidating.

Along with this you can also infer from the quote 'a long talon scratch across his wrist' that it is to his eyes almost a prehistoric creature with loose morals and not frightened by much larger human beings in a battle. This also demonstrates an immediate danger as it seems that even a seasoned professional like the man holding the suitcases, who knows about these creatures, has failed to build a rapport with one at some stage. This suggests that at times whatever is in the box is heartless and selfish as well as not being worried to betray its own, much like a monster. They seem to adhere to a hard-core nature.

EXAMINER COMMENTARY

This student uses relevant and carefully selected detail to support their comments. The student is able to develop thoughtful comments about the implications of the writer's descriptions of the cases and have inferred meaning well. Therefore this answer achieves full marks.

6 marks awarded.

Good use of specific detail to support ideas (R1).

Begins to infer and the comment is well focused on the question (R3).

Well developed with some inferential comment. The student has clearly engaged with the question and is using the detail well to develop their ideas (R3).

QUESTION 3

0 3

How does the writer use language to describe the hawk?

[9 marks]

Examiners must reward any valid interpretations. Answers might, however, include some of the examples given for each question.

AO1

R4: Explain and evaluate how writers use linguistic, grammatical, structural and presentational features to achieve effects and engage and influence the reader.

Marks are awarded for appropriate reference to language usage and consideration of it.

0 mark: nothing relevant.

Award 1-3 marks for answers which **identify some relevant feature(s) of use of language and/or offer simple comment(s) on effect**, for example:

- The writer uses words like 'whirring' to show the hawk is moving.
- The writer uses a simile to say the hawk is 'like gold falling through water'.

Award 4-6 marks for answers which **refer to a range of relevant features of language and make appropriate comment on effect and/or technique**; for example:

- The writer describes the hawk as a 'conjuring trick' to suggest that she is almost magical.
- The contrasting images of a 'reptile' and a 'fallen angel' suggest that the hawk is both somehow ugly and beautiful at the same time.

Award 7-9 marks for answers which **examine and/or analyse use of language and/or explore effects**, for example:

- The writer creates a vivid picture of the hawk by describing its powerful impact on its environment. Before it is released the air turned 'syrupy, slow'. The adjectives create a sense of time standing still, an idea which is emphasised by the comparison with the 'last few seconds before a battle'. Once released, the stillness is broken. There is 'a whirring chaotic clatter' and the hawk's wings are 'barred and beating'. The choice of words and use of onomatopoeia/alliteration emphasises the sound and movement that now fills the air.
- The writer helps the reader to understand that, though powerful, the hawk is also vulnerable and almost childlike. She lists the amazing things the hawk sees for the first time using the conjunction 'and' to emphasise how much there is to see: 'far hills and the heather on them and miles and miles of sky'. The final sentence reverses the impression of a dangerous and uncontrolled creature with the words 'new-stamped' giving a sense of naivety and helplessness.

STUDENT A

Use of detail and identifies it as a simile correctly.

Simple comment – the student repeats the image rather than commenting on the effect here (R4).

Simple identification of techniques used.

Uses relevant detail, correctly identifies the techniques and offers a simple comment on the effect (R4).

The writer uses a vast amount of language techniques to describe the hawk. In the text the writer said 'she is hanging head downward, wings open, like a turkey in a butcher's shop.' The writer has used a simile in this sentence as he has compared the hawk to a turkey in a butcher's shop hanging head downward.

The writer has used a lot of adjectives to describe the hawks. Here are some examples from the text, 'feathers raised like scattered quills', 'two enormous eyes', 'sharp fingers' and 'a fallen angel'. In each of these quotes there is an adjective.

The writer has used a simile. In the text the writer says 'something bright and distant, like gold falling through water'. The writer has used the simile to tell us how bright the hawk is.

EXAMINER COMMENTARY

This student correctly identifies techniques used by the writer in this answer. There are attempts to offer some comment that is more literal and, in the final paragraph, a simple comment on the effect. Therefore this response would be placed at the top of band 1.

3 marks awarded.

STUDENT B

Correctly identifies a relevant technique.

Simple comment (R4).

Identifies a relevant technique and begins to offer some comment on the effect (R4).

Simple comment (R4).

Correctly identifies a technique used and offers a good comment on the effect of the device used by the writer (R4).

Simple comment (R4).

Firstly the writer uses several language techniques to describe the hawk. She uses alliteration to describe the hawk's wings 'the hawk's wings, barred and beating'. This emphasises the wings instead of being plain and common.

However, the writer also includes another language device in 'the sharp fingers of her dark-tipped primaries cutting air'. Here the writer uses a metaphor to emphasise how powerful the hawk's wings are as it could impale air, plus the writer claims the fingers are dark so you could picture it.

Moreover, the writer mentions 'feathers raised like scattered quills'. Here the writer uses a simile to portray the feather as quills to give it more of a clear description, as these are no ordinary feathers in comparison to a pigeon or bird.

Furthermore, the writer uses a contradictory triplet in the lines 'a conjuring trick. A reptile. A fallen angel'. The writer goes into depth of description of the hawk as you can almost picture it through the use of language devices and descriptive phrases that go overboard within the description.

EXAMINER COMMENTARY

This student correctly identifies several techniques used by the writer. Although there are a couple of more simplistic comments on the effects, the student does begin to make appropriate detailed comments on the effects of the use of the simile and metaphor. Therefore the student achieved a mark of 5, in the middle of band 2.

5 marks awarded.

STUDENT C

The writer uses: hyperbole, emotive language and a positive semantic field to describe the hawk.

When reading this section of the passage, the reader is instantly drawn into lexis such as: 'brilliance' and 'astonished'. These words are examples of a positive semantic field and **make the audience feel intrigued and on edge.**

Simple comment (R4).

Good interpretation using relevant detail and commenting on the effects of the methods the writer is using (R4).

Begins to examine the use of contrast. Some more detailed comment on the effect of the imagery used (R4).

This also creates suspense and intensity throughout the passage, making the reader want to read more. **The writer also uses the metaphor 'the air turned syrupy, slow, flecked with dust' to create an atmosphere before introducing the hawk. The lexis 'syrupy' is used to describe what the writer is experiencing. She is nervous so that before she even sees the bird, her surroundings merge into a thick blur that is somewhat 'flecked' with dust. The effects of this are brilliant and the writer uses this metaphor purposely to build tension before meeting the hawk. Macdonald indicates that the bird is 'like gold falling through water' and 'a broken puppet of wings'. The two images instantly juxtapose each other; it first states that the bird is an image of beautiful 'gold' then contrasts this with the idea of a 'broken puppet'. The noun 'gold' gives the bird a unique impression as the metal is rare and expensive. This makes the reader picture how breath-taking the creature is.**

EXAMINER COMMENTARY

This student begins the response with a simple comment on the effect before developing some comment in the second paragraph. The level of focus and more developed comment on the effect of the contrasting images just begins to examine the use of language used by the writer. This response just moves into the upper band for this reason.

7 marks awarded.

STUDENT D

Use of detail.

Clear comment.

Exploration – the student continues to unpick the use of language and explore the effect in some detail here (R4).

Detail and identification of technique.

This is clear exploration, with developing ideas and focus on the metaphor. The student clearly examines the idea of a 'conjuring trick' and applies it well to the effect the description has on the reader's impression of the hawk (R4).

Detail and comments.

Develops comment and examines with close focus on the adjective 'enormous' (R4).

Detail and technique.

Exploration of the image, looking at more than one interpretation or effect of the image (R4).

The writer uses a variety of language techniques to describe the hawk.

Firstly he uses the repetition of short sentences to give a brief outline of the hawk. The lines 'two enormous eyes' and 'A reptile. A fallen angel' have the effect of adding short sharp punches of ideas that go into vague details, leading the reader to fill in the blanks. She juxtaposes the images of 'a reptile' and 'a fallen angel' creating a feeling of ambivalence and confusion about what she is seeing and push this feeling towards the reader so they too are confused and astonished about the characteristics of this animal.

As well as this the writer uses a metaphor to enhance the description of the hawk. The line 'she is a conjuring trick' creates feelings of deceit surrounding the bird. The abstract verb 'conjure' has connotations of magic and trying to deceive people through forms of illusions, which adds a concept of there being sinister acts occurring which only the hawk knows about. To the reader this metaphor of saying that a bird is almost a sorcerer gives the hawk a human-like quality in terms of intelligence, so the writer presents the idea of personification. The bird is perceived to have a human-like level of secrecy and espionage so the reader feels like the bird is almost on the same level as humans and so could certainly inflict harm towards them if she wanted to.

Furthermore the writer also uses hyperbole to emphasise certain characteristics of the bird. The line 'enormous eyes' and 'the man pulls an enormous hawk out of the box' suggest that the bird is incredibly imposing and so the reader perhaps over estimates the size of the bird. The adjective 'enormous' is repeated twice and so it is clearly shown that the writer feels a sense of nervousness and perhaps even feels a sense of threat that the hawk evokes. The word 'enormous' also has connotations associated more with animals like elephants and rhinoceros, so this further emphasises these characteristics and, to the reader, shows that these are prominent features of the hawk.

Another language feature the writer uses is the use of a simile in 'wings open like a turkey in a butchers shop'. This suggests that the hawk has magnificent long wings, but this is also contrasted with the way a turkey is hung before it is put on sale in a butcher's shop. The image also creates an anecdotal experience that can be shared from writer to reader as it creates a vivid image. The image of a bird in a butcher's shop also has connotations of death, which suggest to the reader that death is firmly in the writer's mind and that she may feel the need to protect herself.

EXAMINER COMMENTARY

This student has a thorough and detailed approach to the question. The response utilises several relevant details and explores and examines the effects on the reader. The student begins exploring ideas in the initial paragraph and continues to do so throughout. Therefore this student achieved a mark of 9 at the top of band 3.

9 marks awarded.

0 4

Suggest reasons to explain why the hawk behaves the way she does.

[4 marks]

Examiners must reward any valid interpretations. Answers might, however, include some of the examples given for each question.

AO1

R1: Read and understand texts, selecting and utilising material appropriate to purpose.

R3: Develop and sustain interpretations of writers' ideas and perspectives. Marks are awarded for appropriate selection of detail and consideration of it.

0 mark: nothing relevant.

Award 1 mark for answers which **offer an appropriate detail and/or makes a simple comment**; for example, the hawk is frightened.

Award 2 marks for answers which **offer a few details and/or some appropriate supported explanation**, for example:

- The hawk is frightened as the writer describes how she has 'wild eyes'.
- The hawk does not trust the writer, only the man who 'fed her' and raised her from a chick.

Award 3-4 marks for answers which **offer a coherent explanation of the reasons for the hawk's behaviour** for example:

- The man has raised the hawk since she was a chick so she trusts him, yet she is frightened by the writer's presence and has her 'hackles raised' as a defensive signal.
- The hawk has never been outside an aviary before. When she is brought out of the box 'the whole world had fallen into [her eyes] at once' and is strange and startling to her. The writer's description of her 'wild eyes' wide open with fear and her brain 'fizzing and fusing with terror' suggests this is a traumatic experience for the hawk.

STUDENT A

Simple comment (R3).

Detail (R1).

Detail (R1).

Supported explanation
of why the hawk is
frightened (R3).

The hawk is acting like it is scared because it has been in a box and then the man is taking it out of the box to show to the writer. It is frightened and you can see this when the writer says 'the whole world had fallen into them at once' which suggests that the hawk does not know what she is seeing and is frightened.

EXAMINER COMMENTARY

This student starts with a simple comment on why the hawk is frightened. This is then developed more in the subsequent comments. The response is more than just simple comment so it moves into band 2.

2 marks awarded.

STUDENT B

Detail (R1).

Uses detail to support
explanation (R1, 3).

Detail to support
explanation of why the
hawk is frightened
(R1,3).

When the man brings the hawk out of the box it is frightened by what it can see. The hawk shows its fear by raising its hackles and opening her beak as if trying to scare off a larger predator. The writer then goes on to describe how the hawk seems to take everything in very suddenly with 'wild eyes', as if being faced with this new and strange world is too much for her. The description of her eyes showing fear 'as if the whole world had fallen into them at once' implies that there is too much for the hawk to take in and she behaves in a way that suggests she

EXAMINER COMMENTARY

This student draws on some range of detail to support the explanations for the hawk's behaviour. The student begins to offer a coherent explanation, drawing together their ideas. There is more than just 'some explanation', therefore this response moves into band 3.

3 marks awarded.

STUDENT C

Coherent explanation, bringing in detail from across the lines in support (R1,3).

Supported explanation and use of detail (R1,3).

This hawk has been born in an incubator and raised by the man who has 'fed her with scraps of meat' from a chick. Therefore she is not used to other humans and the world outside her cage so it is not surprising that she acts with fear; 'her hackles raised' and her 'wild eyes' wide open with fear as she is taking in all that now surrounds her in a state of terror. The writer suggests that the hawk is almost traumatised by what she now sees as she describes how her brain appeared to be 'fizzing and fusing with terror'. This new view is clearly strange and threatening to the hawk, who needs the hood putting back on instantly to prevent her fear from developing.

EXAMINER COMMENTARY

This student offers a coherent and detailed response to the question. The student used several judicious details in support of a thorough explanation for the hawk's behaviour. Therefore this response falls at the top of band 3 and achieves full marks.

4 marks awarded.

QUESTION 5

0 5

Explain why the writer asks to take the first bird rather than the second one.

[9 marks]

Examiners must reward any valid interpretations. Answers might, however, include some of the examples given for each question.

AO1

R1: Read and understand texts, selecting and utilising material appropriate to purpose.

R2: Collate and synthesise detail from different one or more sources, making cross-references and comparisons as appropriate.

R3: Develop and sustain interpretations of writers' ideas and perspectives.

Marks are awarded for appropriate selection and explanation of detail.

0 mark: nothing relevant.

Award 1-3 mark for answers which **offer isolated literal detail(s) and/or unsupported assertion**, for example:

- The writer doesn't like the second bird.
- It was the wrong bird.

Award 4-6 marks for answers which **begin to collate a range of relevant detail and/or use detail to develop some relevant explanation** of why the writer asks to take the first bird, for example:

- The second hawk is larger and older than the first hawk and 'much, much bigger' and it frightens the writer.
- When the writer looks at the first hawk's eyes she says they were 'the colour of the sun on white paper' but when she looks at the second hawk's eyes she sees 'something blank and crazy in her stare'.

Award 7-9 marks for answers which **offer a coherent supported explanation of** why the writer asks to take the first bird; may make subtle inference, for example:

- The writer is clearly anxious and might have been worried by the man saying, 'Don't want you to go home with the wrong bird'. When she sees the first bird, she seems mesmerized by its 'brilliance and fury' and her 'heart jumps sideways'. However, with the second hawk she is shocked by its sounds and its movement. Instead of seeing 'brilliance and fury' she sees 'a sort of mad woman in the attack'.
- Unintentionally, the writer has been given the chance to compare the two birds. If she had only seen the second bird she might have been happy with it. Even though it is also 'bareheaded', she is unable to empathise with it. Instead of appreciating its fear, as she did with the first hawk, she seems frightened by it and seems to feel instinctively that this isn't the hawk she is intended to have.

STUDENT A

Use of detail to support answer (R1).

The writer had a look at the second hawk and decided to ask if she could keep the first one. By reading the text I believe that the writer did not think the second hawk was hers. In the text the writer said 'I didn't recognise her. This isn't my hawk'. This shows us why the writer wanted the first hawk.

EXAMINER COMMENTARY

This student has used one isolated detail, with no real comment as to why the writer preferred the first hawk. Therefore this student achieved a mark of 1 at the bottom of band 1.

1 mark awarded.

Relevant comment related to the question (R3).

STUDENT B

Begins to offer comment related to detail (R3).

By the words the writer uses for the first bird you can tell that she fell in love. The emotions were so strong. Most, if not all, the words used describe the first bird were positive and make the reader love the bird as much as she does.

Use of detail in support of previous comment on positive words (R1, R2).

'Gold' is important and when this bird is compared to gold it really does make you notice how important it is to the writer.

Begins to develop comment on the effect of this detail (R3)

However, the second bird was described with negative words like: 'darker', 'awful' and 'unbearable'. Right away the reader knows the writer dreads having the second bird and the words mentioned in the description of the second bird were not nice words.

Begins to collate detail (R2).

Begins to develop an explanation as to why the writer preferred the first bird (R3).

The feeling the writer had from the two birds was completely different and the first bird is much happier and positive, whereas the second bird was so ghastly and negative. She connected with the first bird and thought of having the second bird terrified her.

EXAMINER COMMENTARY

This student begins to use detail from across the extract in support of their ideas. There is a clear focus on the question and the student begins to develop some comment on the reasons why the writer preferred the first bird. However, the explanations are not fully developed (fully developed would mean a band 3). The response falls in the middle of band 2.

5 marks awarded.

STUDENT C

Use of detail (R1).

Explains using detail to support (R3).

Begins comment.

Detail clearly supports point here (R1,3).

Develops explanation (R2,3).

The writer wanted to take the first bird because the second hawk did not suit her tastes. This is evidenced when she describes how she 'saw something blank and crazy'. From this we can infer that the writer was repulsed by the negative traits of the hawk and wanted the first hawk because it was more graceful, sane and calm.

Also, the writer 'didn't want the second bird because its cries were less pleasant' than those of the first hawk, which gave a 'high-pitched twittering' as opposed to 'awful gouts of sound like a thing in pain'. From this we can tell that the writer changed birds 'because they wanted a relaxing and beautiful hawk, not one which sounded like a tortured animal'.

EXAMINER COMMENTARY

This student offers a clear focus on the question and selects detail from the extract in support of their point. The student begins to offer a coherent overview of the reasons why the writer chose the first bird. The answer is more than just developed explanation, therefore moving it into the higher band.

7 marks awarded.

STUDENT D

Subtle idea, picked up from the focus the writer gives to details on how the bird looks (R3).

Selects judicious detail from across the extract – collating (R2).

Develops comment, supporting well with prior detail (R1,2,3).

Develops an explanation further, building on earlier comments (R2,3).

Use of detail to support point on contrast. Answer is coherent and developed (R2,3).

The writer asks for the first bird due to her disinterest and dislike for the older bird. The writer's descriptions of the older bird derive from the personality the writer believes the bird has, 'based purely on the bird's appearance'. The simile of the bird's entrance as a 'Victorian melodrama' implies the writer's dislike of the theatre and presence the bird appears to have. Additionally, the writer gleans a certain lunacy from the bird's appearance and describes the bird as a 'madwoman in the attack' and 'blank and crazy' as well as appearing to obtain 'madness' from a foreign country. 'These descriptions can lead to the assumption that the writer was fearful of the older hawk and that its size was inconsequential to her.'

Furthermore, the words 'awful gouts of sound like a thing in pain' demonstrate the writer's negativity towards the hawk's sound as well as its appearance and consequently lead to the epiphany of the writer of 'This is not my hawk'.

Additionally, the comparison of the writer's reaction to the first and second hawk was starkly contrasting. The sense of wonder and respect the writer had for the first bird, which she described as 'something bright and distant, like gold falling through water', was absent during her encounter with the second hawk, which was instead replaced with a lack of familiarity and 'panic'.

EXAMINER COMMENTARY

This student develops their explanation and reasoning in a coherent and supported manner. There is clear evidence of collating of evidence from across the extract, which is relevant and judicious in places. The student establishes a clear judgement in the opening of the response, which is then developed coherently throughout. Therefore this student achieved a mark of 9 at the top of band 3.

9 marks awarded.

QUESTION 6

0 6

What have you learnt about the man who brings the hawks?

[9 marks]

Examiners must reward any valid interpretations. Answers might, however, include some of the examples given for each question.

AO1

R1: Read and understand texts, selecting and utilising material appropriate to purpose.

R2: Collate and synthesise detail from different one or more sources, making cross-references and comparisons as appropriate.

R3: Develop and sustain interpretations of writers' ideas and perspectives.

Marks are awarded for appropriate selection and explanation of detail.

0 mark: nothing relevant.

Award 1-3 marks for answers which **offer isolated relevant literal detail(s) and/or unsupported assertion**, for example:

- He cares a lot about the hawks.
- He lets the woman have the hawk she wants.

Award 4-6 marks for answers which **collate some relevant detail and/or use detail to make some relevant comment** about the man, for example:

- He is very calm in dealing with the hawks as he 'gathered up the hawk in one practised movement'.
- The man is full of concern and care for the hawks. He frowns when he realises the hood is off and is anxious to put it back on as soon as possible.
- The man has bred the hawks in captivity. I think this is a cruel thing to do as they are wild creatures and obviously very unhappy in their boxes.

Award 7-9 marks for answers which **collate and use a range of relevant detail to make inference and explore** the character of the man who brings the hawks, for example:

- The man is clearly a very experienced breeder of captive hawks. He raises them from chicks and then sells them; this could be regarded as cruel as hawks are wild birds and should be allowed to roam freely. However, he must be very patient as he feeds the chicks by hand with tweezers and his experience and affinity with the birds is shown in the way he is immediately aware when something is wrong, noting that 'she's got her hood off'.
- He seems to be very perceptive and understanding by the way he realises the distress of the writer and her need to have the first hawk rather than the second. Even though he has promised the first hawk to someone else, he is prepared to face any problems that may follow because of her obvious desperation, showing that he is prepared to do everything he can to satisfy his customers and find the right home for his birds.

STUDENT A

Repeats detail rather than comments (R1).

Repeats detail rather than comments (R1).

I have learnt that the man is calm because it says 'The man was perfectly calm'. I have also learnt that he cares for the birds because he must care for them if he looks after them at his house.

EXAMINER COMMENTARY

This student selects literal detail and makes an unsupported assertion about the man and his caring for the hawks. This response would fall in the middle of band 1.

2 marks awarded.

STUDENT B

Simple comment (R3).

Use of relevant detail (R1).

Begins to comment (R3).

Detail referred to.

I've learnt that the man who brought the hawks knows a lot about hawks. He is also careful with the hawks when putting them in the boxes and taking them out. In the text the writer said 'there was a concern on his face. It was born of care'. This teaches us about the man.

Another thing I learnt is that the man is very caring and is a nice gentleman. I say this because when the writer wanted to swap the hawks the man agreed with no problem at all.

EXAMINER COMMENTARY

This student selects relevant detail and begins to make comment about what is learnt about the man. The comments are undeveloped therefore the response just moved into band 2.

4 marks awarded.

STUDENT C

Detail (R1).

Uses detail to make some relevant comment (R3).

Collates some detail to make relevant comment (R2,3).

A relevant comment, based on detail from the extract. Student makes a thoughtful judgement in relation to the focus on the question (R3).

My first impressions of the man who brings the birds aren't very good as the writer mentions that he has **a scratch on his wrist with dried blood**. This implies that he hadn't cleaned the scratch after it happened, **so the man seems quite rough and dirty**. He also runs his hands through his hair a lot and, from experience, this would make it look greasy and make him look even dirtier.

Then my thoughts on the man change because he is very caring as he gets the hawk out. The writer says 'there was concern in his face'. You would have to be very patient to do what he has done with these hawks. The man must love his birds as he feeds them 'with tweezers'.

Near the end of the passage the man agrees to the woman taking the smaller bird rather than her larger one. **I think this is because he trusted her and could see that she fell in love with the first hawk and that she would take good care of his bird**. Overall, the man seems a genuinely nice person who isn't always set by the rules. I also think he has a good heart.

EXAMINER COMMENTARY

There are elements of the student collating detail from across the extract in support of comments. The student is beginning to develop comment in places, particularly in the final paragraph. Therefore this response is at the top of band 2.

6 marks awarded.

STUDENT D

Good use of detail (R1).

Comments and infers (R3).

Uses detail well to support inferential comment (R1,3).

Relevant comment (R3).

Uses detail to comment (R1,3).

Infers – based on relevant detail (R3).

The writer illustrates and reflects the man as a caring, knowledgeable character in the passage. The first noticeable character of the man is that of his agedness and tiredness due to the fact he 'ran his hand through his hair' multiple times, a behaviour which suggests he is a little agitated for some reason. Coupled with the relatively fresh talon wound on his wrist (evident by the dried blood), the man could be seen to be weathered by his job.

In spite of this, the description of the man as 'perfectly calm' during the stressful episode of removing the first bird demonstrates his experience and knowledge in his profession. This is enforced by his skills of gathering the hawk in 'one practised movement'.

Another trait of the man is that of his genuine interest and care towards the birds. The words 'there was concern in his face. It was born of care' and also the fact he had fed and nurtured the bird from young, portray his selflessness and love of the birds.

Lastly, he is shown to be compassionate due to his letting the writer have the first bird. His tolerance is also evident, despite his raised eyebrows upon her request.

EXAMINER COMMENTARY

The student uses a range of detail from across the extract in this response, collating evidence in order to support their ideas (R2). There is some relevant and thoughtful comment as well as evidence of inferred meaning. The student has clearly thought about the impression given of the man and articulates their ideas well. This response is in the middle of band 3.

8 marks awarded

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