



Examiners' Report

June 2022

International GCSE English Language A 4EA1 02

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Introduction

This report will provide exemplification of candidates' work, together with tips and comments, for Paper 2 of the Pearson Edexcel International GCSE Specification A in English Language. This was the summer 2022 series of the 'A' specification in IGCSE English Language 9-1.

The specification consists of three components: Unit 1: Non-fiction and Transactional Writing – 60% (examination); Unit 2: Poetry and Prose Texts and Imaginative Writing – 40% (this examination) OR Unit 3: Poetry and Prose Texts and Imaginative Writing – 40% (non-examination assessment). Candidates may also be entered for the optional Spoken Language Endorsement (non-examination assessment).

Unit 2 for Poetry and Prose Texts and Imaginative Writing is assessed through an examination lasting one hour and thirty minutes. The total number of marks available is 60. The reading and writing sections on this paper are loosely linked by the theme of the text from the Anthology which appears on the examination paper.

This focus of this component is:

Section A – Poetry and Prose Texts: study and analyse selections from a range of fictional poetry and prose texts.

Candidates should study the poetry and prose provided in Part 2 of the *Pearson Edexcel International GCSE English Anthology* in preparation for responding to a given prose extract or poem in the examination.

The specification identifies that candidates:

'should be able to read substantial pieces of writing (extended texts) that make significant demands on them in terms of content, structure and the quality of language. Throughout the qualification, candidates should develop the skills of inference and analysis.'

Candidates are advised to allocate 45 minutes to Section A, and there will be one essay question on a poetry or prose text from Part 2 of the *Pearson Edexcel International GCSE English Anthology*, which will be made available in a booklet in the examination if it is a longer extract or will be in the Question Paper in the case of a poem. Candidates will answer the question in this section and 30 marks are available. There are three bullet points to prompt the response and the third bullet always asks candidates to consider language and structure.

Section B – Imaginative Writing: explore and develop imaginative writing skills.

Candidates are advised to allocate 45 minutes to Section B. There are three writing tasks, to some extent linked by theme to the reading prose extract or poem. Candidates pick one question to respond to and the response is worth 30 marks. The format of the tasks remains the same for each series – Question 1 follows the format ‘Write about a time when you, or someone you know...’, Question 2 follows the format ‘Write a story with the title...’ and Question 3 offers two images as a prompt for a response which is always ‘Write a story that begins...’ or ‘Write a story that ends...’.

The Assessment Objectives for this paper are:

Section A: Reading

AO1:

- read and understand a variety of texts, selecting and interpreting information, ideas and perspectives

AO2:

- understand and analyse how writers use linguistic and structural devices to achieve their effects

Section B: Writing

AO4:

- communicate effectively and imaginatively, adapting form, tone and register of writing for specific purposes and audiences

AO5:

- write clearly, using a range of vocabulary and sentence structures, with appropriate paragraphing and accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation.

It was clear that candidates were all able to respond to the poem from the Anthology in the examination, and that most had studied it before. Some candidates had been taught the context of and background to the poem and the writer.

Throughout the qualification, overall candidates had been prepared well and all had, at different levels, developed the skills required to answer the questions.

It was also clear that candidates used what they had studied in their reading to feed into their imaginative writing, which inspired them. As the specification identifies, the main aims for our candidates in this paper are:

- read critically and use knowledge gained from wide reading to inform and improve their own writing
- write effectively and coherently using Standard English appropriately
- use grammar correctly, punctuate and spell accurately
- acquire and apply a wide vocabulary alongside knowledge and understanding of grammatical terminology, and linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language

Candidates had, pleasingly, been given the opportunity to practise their writing techniques and planning and proofreading skills

The responses of candidates had some positive features. Examiners were impressed by:

- evidence that many candidates had understood and engaged with the content of and ideas in the poem
- the successful, integrated use of the bullet points within the question,
- coverage of the assessment objectives required for this paper
- the range of ideas and creativity for AO4
- the attempt to vary vocabulary, punctuation and sentence structure for AO5
- writing that showed at least appropriate tone, style and register for audience and purpose.

Less successful responses:

- demonstrated a lack of knowledge of the poem and/or lack of awareness of the ideas in the poem relevant to the question
- failed to reference the question, with candidates simply writing something about the poem or writer very broadly
- rigidly followed the bullet points in the question so that language and structure points were almost an 'add-on' at the end
- had an insecure grasp of language and structure with a lack of understanding of how language and structure were used, feature-spotting or confusion of terms
- had limited comment on language and structure and relied heavily on description of the poem or paraphrasing of it for Question 1
- failed to support points using appropriate textual evidence or used over-long quotations
- lacked organisation in their writing
- lacked accurate spelling and secure control of punctuation and grammar.

It was clear that candidates had been able to find at least some information about how the writer was creating strong feelings and could comment on language and structural features. Imaginative writing was often interesting, engaging and enthusiastic and had a clear sense of purpose and audience in the voice and ideas used. Overall, examiners were very impressed with the performance of candidates and with the range of responses they saw. As Principal Examiner for this paper and Chief Examiner for the specification, it was a privilege to read such accomplished work and to see the engagement, interest and significant hard work in the responses candidates had completed.

Question 1

AO1

The first two bullet points in the mark scheme relate to AO1 – read and understand a variety of texts, selecting and interpreting information, ideas and perspectives. The level of understanding of the text from the Anthology is assessed in the first bullet point, and the selection and interpretation of information, ideas and perspectives in the text in the second bullet point. Overall, candidates clearly engaged with the poem. The bullet points were followed by the vast majority of candidates and helped them to focus on the question.

At the very basic level candidates tended to comment very broadly on what was being said in the poem. They were able to show some understanding of the poem, but the understanding and focus on strong feelings was uneven. There was often limited selection and interpretation of information and ideas. Less successful responses tended to use the bullet points as headings and then had sections of the poem copied out, with limited comment. This tended to lead to rather fragmented and repetitive responses that could make it difficult to discern 'clear understanding' and above.

There were candidates who seemed unprepared for this taught poem, clearly not having really been taught it, and these tended to be the weaker responses. Some less successful responses were unclear in their knowledge of the poem – for example thinking the narrator is the girl who does the henna or not understanding culturally specific references. These responses often failed to see the wider metaphor of the poem, instead focusing on the henna and how much she enjoyed it/how skilful the girl is.

Mid-level responses were at least able to identify some of the key areas of the poem which would inspire or demonstrate strong feelings, although there was often an imbalance where the focus was on identifying basic/valid ideas and information from the poem that had some connection to feelings (for example, the writer's feelings about the unknown girl and India) rather than being appropriate, apt or persuasive for the higher levels. For example, candidates achieving the mid-level often had not considered more than broad ideas. There was a lack of 'drilling down' into the poem to examine the more nuanced ideas that were considered by candidates achieving higher marks, for example the fact that the writer and the unknown girl were both 'unknown' in some ways and the poem was about coming to know yourself. There were some good interpretations of the tensions between east and west, and how the poet was torn between two cultures.

The best responses were more direct in approach, as they were able to select the relevant ideas from the poem relating to the creation of strong feelings in a detailed but succinct manner. These responses tended to cover the full poem and offered detailed points. At the higher levels examiners felt that there was a definite sense of personal interpretation of the poem, with many identifying with the pull of two cultures. One examiner noted 'I read some absolutely outstanding responses'.

Some typical ideas were:

- the henna as a part of Indian culture and its importance to the poet
- hidden/forgotten identity
- Eastern versus Western culture
- longing
- positive views of the culture of India.

More personalised interpretations were:

- 'shadow stitched' suggests a link to her hidden identity
- the fact that the unknown girl remains unknown throughout the poem highlights that the writer feels she may never come to a conclusion about herself
- 'steadies her knee' suggesting the girl is a grounding force in the midst of an identity crisis
- she is being shielded from the outside world by her small utopia that is the marketplace
- presents the unknown girl as a sense of hope and a sense of yearning
- brown veins to brown lines – the life is now sucked out of her
- 'Amber bird' was interpreted as a phoenix, a mythical bird that symbolically represents Alvi's British identity and then is reborn again through the process of hennaing.

One examiner commented:

'Students had an excellent grasp of Alvi's struggle between two cultures and used many references from the text to support this idea. I was also impressed by how they explored the relationship with the unknown girl – some very perceptive interpretations emerged.'

AO2

The third bullet point in the mark scheme relates to AO2 – understand and analyse how writers use linguistic and structural devices to achieve their effects. There needs to be understanding of the language and structure used in the text, and the level of skill is also a discriminator. *Explain* is a mid-level skill, *comment* a lower level skill and *explore/analyse* higher-level skills, which gives candidates opportunities to achieve across the range.

At the lowest levels candidates often made reference to language and structure as a brief add-on at the end of the answer. Candidates here often identified and named devices, but did not demonstrate the skill or understanding to discuss their use, and did not link these to the question. At this level responses were characterised by writing without any explanations – candidates here were good at finding both language and structure features, but not as confident at explaining them. The responses were much more at a descriptive level, with limited and underdeveloped evidence.

Mid-level responses were commenting on and explaining language and structure, with appropriate and relevant references. These responses often demonstrated the ability to be able to pick out features in the poem, but often there was little developed explanation of the effect of these features. The majority were able to comment clearly on, for example, simile, metaphor, vivid imagery such as the 'icing of the hand', repetition, short sentences. Some explanations were non-specific and unrelated to the question: 'The writer uses language and structure to engage the reader.' Many commented on colour imagery, for example 'Satin and peach have connotations of warmth and intimacy' and how the neon lights were 'harsh and artificial', creating contrast: 'satin peach knee soft colours contrasted with the harsh lights making her Indian self seem quite gentle'.

The best responses were making points about both language and structure consistently, confidently and succinctly. These responses were exploring and analysing language and structure, with detailed and discriminating references. At the higher levels candidates were able to explore less obvious features, such as the shift in tone. The examples of language and structure used in the best responses were much more considered and selected, showing a perceptive understanding of the way the poet creates strong feelings and the effect of details selected on the readers, for example references to the change in tone or exploring in more detail the symbolism of the peacock and the 'icing' image. The best responses tended to pick out the images of Westernisation (the dummies with the perms for example) and how these seem to be judging the narrator and acting as a wider metaphor to her cultural divisions.

There were a number of interesting points made on structure noted this series. Candidates at a range of levels engaged with the free verse form, with a range of interpretations, for example 'allowing the poem to feel reflective, 'show her sense of uncertainty and inner conflict'. Some were able to explain and explore the perceived lack of punctuation to 'create a sense of fluency – a single uninterrupted train of thought'. Many responses considered the use of short sentences with varying degrees of success for example 'it will fade in a week – chosen to highlight her feelings/abruptness of change' and 'The short sentence "It...week"' encapsulates Alvi's emotions of disappointment and sadness. Repetition and juxtaposition were also popular, especially with Eastern versus Western culture, with some success.

The final bullet point in the mark scheme relates to selection and use of references from the text which has been studied for both AO1 and AO2. This is a very useful discriminator in this question. As previously mentioned, candidates were sometimes unable to consider references that supported different ideas and information (rather than many references which illustrated the same point) where candidates perhaps missed key elements that would have demonstrated apt, persuasive selection of information and ideas.

1 How does the writer try to present strong feelings in *An Unknown Girl*?

In your answer, you should write about:

- how the writer feels about the experience with the girl.
- how the writer feels about the culture of India
- the use of language and structure.

You should support your answer with close reference to the poem, including **brief** quotations.

(30)

The text *An Unknown Girl* includes masses of strong feelings throughout. The writer feels a connection to the girl through the henna 'I am clinging to these firm peacock lines' as if the writer is almost getting to know her through her art. This is again shown near the end of the text 'I'll lean across a country with my hands outstretched longing for the unknown girl in the neon bazaar.' Suggesting the writer must feel something

for the unknown girl, the connection is there. The writer also makes comments relating to the culture of India. In these statements 'Dummies in shop-fronts tilt and stare' and 'Now the furious streets are hushed' makes the readers feel as though India is a very busy place with a big population, although maybe a lot of them aren't very smart.



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Examiners Comments

This answer opens with a connection to the question, and the reference that there is a 'connection to the girl through the henna' is valid, but not developed more than 'getting to know her through her art'. Other than this point, the response is quite limited.

This is a basic response in its brevity and coverage. There is basic understanding of the text, which does border on 'some understanding'. The selection and interpretation of information is valid in the sense that it is linked to the question, but there is not much of it. There is a lack of any identification of language and structure (the point about 'statements' is not linked to a point about structure). The first bullet point in the mark scheme is met on the Level 1/2 borderline. This is the same for the second bullet point – there is selection of the feelings of connection, that India is busy (is this connected to the question?) and that people are not 'smart', which is, presumably, an interpretation of the word 'dummies'. There is no identification or evidence of understanding of language and structure. References are included, if a little vague in connection to the question and a little long on the first page. The 'best-fit' for this response is at the top of Level 1 with a mark of 6.

the dry brown lines
before I sleep,
reveal soft as a snail trail
the amber bird beneath.
It will fade in a week.

When India appears and reappears

I'll lean across a country
with my hands outstretched
longing for the unknown girl
in the neon bazaar.

lines the
culture

Moniza Alvi

¹ *hennaing*: the art of body decoration using a plant dye

² *kameez*: loose fitting tunic

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(30)

An ~~Unknown~~ Unknown Girl, by Moniza Alvi, is about the writer's experience in India. They mentioned that refer to their experience being positive ~~to~~ through the strong feelings that emerge from the visit. The author uses various language and structure techniques to ~~achieve~~ their goal highlight their

Moniza Alvi suggests that

they didn't have a good initial view on India's culture by using the word 'evening'. Evening has connotations towards darkness and bad feelings. However, ~~they~~ they juxtapose their initial thoughts by using words such as; 'neon', '~~peacock~~ peacock' and 'amber'. These words are semantic fields for something being bright and colourful and therefore radiating strong, positive feelings towards the culture, suggesting that ~~their~~ their opinion on the culture has changed.

The writer also suggest that they had a good experience to the girl that drew the nenna as they are; 'clinging to these firm peacock lines like people who cling to the sides of a train'. The writer uses

a simile to emphasise the writer's attachment to the girl. 'Clinging' could suggest is a good word choice by the writer as it represents that they don't wish to lose this memory and have a sense of attachment towards the memory. Furthermore, the writer mentions that they are 'longing for the unknown girl'. This could further enforce the idea that they have good positive feelings towards the girl as they don't want to ~~see~~ ~~lose~~ ~~her~~ be away from her.



Responses at Level 2 tend to be 'underdeveloped' and this is an example. It begins with a general introduction and the experience being positive without further comment. Whilst the point made on 'evening' is not convincing the candidate does try to link through juxtaposition to colour and the now positive feelings of the culture. This is a valid point with an attempt at further comment. The next point on 'henna' and the link to 'clinging' is also valid as it tries to comment on attachment though it does not go as far as explanation. There is a final valid point in 'longing for the unknown girl' but the comment is repetitive.

The candidate tries to focus on language and structure identifying: juxtaposition/semantic field/simile with some valid comment. There are word level references. The use of 'connotations' implies an effect on the reader.

There is 'some understanding of the text' here, Level 2. The selection and interpretation of information is valid, but really comes back to the same point – positive. There is some understanding of, and comment on, language and structure. The selection of references is valid, but not developed. The response meets all the bullet points from the mark scheme in Level 2 but lacks the explanation required for Level 3.

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(30)

Alvi presents strong feelings in *An Unknown Girl* through her intricate and detailed description in her experience. The writer uses colour a lot to describe the atmosphere of her experience such as: "neon bazaar", "studded with neon" ~~and~~ "colours leave the streets" and "amber bird". The amber bird could perhaps be a phoenix, the colour amber is warm, ~~implying~~ suggesting a calm atmosphere. The adjective "neon" that Alvi used to describe the bazaar has connotations of excitement, buzzing and something extraordinary. When the colours "leave the street" and "float up in balloons" this is suggesting that the balloons are traditional lanterns. The ~~imagery~~ colour imagery connects the experience with the reader to strongly present and share the experience.

Secondly, Alvi talks about a lot of India's traditions and daily life throughout this text. The "colours leaving the street float up ~~to~~ in balloons for an example represents the ~~text~~ traditional lantern events. The ~~text~~ animal "peacock" is used twice in this text which also represents India ~~text~~. Furthermore, "the simile "like people who cling to the side of trains" was something that often happens daily to travel in India. By using these examples, ~~she~~^{Alvi} shows her appreciation for the Indian culture. Near the end, the writer exclaimed "longing for the unknown girl", this is suggesting that even when the writer leaves, she will long for the culture and the parts of the experience that will stick with her, thus showing again her appreciation of the Indian culture.

~~The text is titled "the unknown girl" and~~

Alvi expresses her interest in the girl that was hennaing her hand. The text is called "the unknown girl" and has been repeated several times throughout. This shows the writers curiosity as she doesn't just call her "the girl" but adds in the word "unknown" which has connotations of a mystery. The writer uses detailed description to describe the actions of "the unknown girl" such as "from a nozzle she is icing my hand", this description is almost relating ~~to~~ hennaing to decorating and "icing" a cake, emphasising her interest and curiosity in the unknown girl.

In conclusion, Alvi ~~represents her~~ ~~curri~~ presents her strong feeling in this text by representing their culture and ~~a~~ curiosity towards their traditions and "the unknown girl".



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This is a response that shows some sound understanding of the poem and links quite well to the question after a clear, focused opening sentence. There is a clear idea of the contrast between the two cultures, and how language is used to show the girl's appreciation of Indian culture.

Selection and interpretation of information and ideas is mostly appropriate and relevant but the explanations are not always developed – for example the points on colour in paragraph one and the references to the balloons and the peacock in paragraph two.

For AO2 there is some clear understanding and explanation of language and structure techniques (the repetition of 'the unknown girl', the explanation of the 'icing' image), but also some more descriptive language points in the first two paragraphs of the response, which are less developed. Parts of the response, most notably in the third paragraph, meet the Level 3 AO2 descriptor. There are some comments which are more Level 2, showing some understanding of the text, with appropriate references and attempts at explanation.

However, overall there is sound understanding of the text (Level 3), appropriate and relevant selection of references (Level 3) and some clear understanding and explanation of language and structure (notably in the third paragraph). The response meets most of the Level 3 descriptors from the mark scheme, and it achieves a mark in the middle of Level 3 – 16. It is a secure Level 3 response which does not get near to the exploration required for Level 4.

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(30)

Alvi uses the poem 'An Unknown Girl' to explore her feelings whilst reconnecting to her Indian culture. She expresses her gratitude and awe at the artistry of henna, and for the girl who illustrated her hand.

Alvi introduces the poem by describing "the evening bazaar studded with neon", the use of the adjective 'neon' connotes the vibrance and brilliance of the setting - it is bright and alive with colour. The importance of this bazaar is emphasized by the cyclical structure of the poem, as "the ^{neon} ~~neon~~

"bazaar" is mentioned ~~during~~ as the last line of the poem. The emphasis on the bazaar implies its importance to Alvi as it is the place that allowed her to reconnect with her culture, ~~and~~ even if briefly - she views it as a route back to Indian culture.

Alvi employs the repetition of "An unknown girl is hennaing my hand." To illustrate how the experience ~~was~~ was important to her, and how crucial of a step she believed it to be in ~~the~~ rediscovering her heritage. Alvi describes her henna as her having "new brown veins." The use of a single line sentence contrasts the usual 2 or 4 line sentences. The abruptness of the statement ~~emphasizes~~ reinforces the fact of what a crucial moment Alvi felt this to be in her journey. She felt connected to her culture instead of being in a state of attempting reconnection. The metaphor "brown veins" implies how included she feels; less like an imposter and more belonging. The use of the adjective 'new' ~~emphasizes~~ shows how recent this revelation is and her relief of finally achieving progress towards her goal.

Alvi describes the westernization of her culture with disdain as "their Western perms." Are what she is trying to escape. She employs the noun 'western' to explicitly isolate their presence in the bazaar. They clearly don't belong but Westernization has spread globally and Alvi connotes the negative impacts this can have. Her singling them out also implies that she has the same thoughts about herself not belonging or fitting in as she herself has also been ~~the~~ the victim of Westernization. This implication ~~creates~~ ~~the~~ allows the intensification of the feeling of Alvi's desperation as she is "Clinging to these firm peacock lines", the use of the transitive verb 'clinging' connotes her avid desperation to reconnect with the culture she feels she's lost, and how vital it is to safe-guard her successes in doing so. The use of the metaphor "firm peacock lines" illustrates not only the natural beauty of the henna & Indian culture, but the use of the adjective 'firm' implies Alvi's belief that her steps toward reconnecting won't be in vain and that she is slowly but surely rediscovering her heritage. The changes she has made seem to be absolute and

Solid.

Strong feelings are presented thoroughly throughout 'An Unknown Girl' and mainly centre around a lost, westernized girl who is desperate to reconnect to her culture, and the beauty of how she attempts to do so.



This response opens with a very clear focus on the question and the idea of strong feelings. The introductory paragraph shows clear evidence of AO1 as the candidate recognises 'reconnecting', 'gratitude' and 'awe'.

The response shows quite sustained understanding of the poem, and there is a real attempt to respond to the question and content of the poem. There is comment on language and structure, often through the bazaar, with comment on 'neon' and what that represents in terms of the place being 'right and alive with colour'. Structure is recognised on the first page with the candidate commenting on the cyclical nature of the poem, the use of repetition and the single line sentence which forms a contrast to the two or four-line sentences. There is a range of language indicators, such as 'connotes' and 'emphasising' which show that there is exploration here and a move beyond explicit meaning. A range of techniques is explored. The recognition of the 'crucial moment...in her journey' shows sustained understanding. Feelings are identified; 'relief' at the bottom of the second page is less strong, although the comment about 'disdain' at the top of the third page shows more control and insight. The comments about Westernisation are appropriate and there is exploration around the idea of the dummies, like her, not fitting in. There is word level analysis of 'the transitive verb 'clinging'', and the candidate links this to her feeling 'lost' and needing to reconnect with her Indian culture and heritage.

Overall, there is depth and detail in this response. The candidate mostly shows a secure and sustained understanding of the poem. However, there are points that could have been developed further to move this to the top of Level 4, such as the 'awe' and 'gratitude' that were hinted at in the opening paragraph. Understanding is mostly sustained, but the response is not working towards 'perceptive' in Level 5.

For AO2 there is definite clear understanding and explanation of language and structure and how these are used by writers to achieve effects. A mark of 22 in the middle of Level 4 is awarded.

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(30)

Moniza Alvi presents ~~the~~ her strong feelings about her experience with the girl through the use of the sense of touch and positive ~~the~~ diction ~~conveying~~ conveying ^{the} precision of her actions.

Alvi describes how the girl 'is hennaing my hand', with the repetition of 'hennaing' ~~is~~ and other present participles such as 'icing' and 'steadies' ~~indicating~~ throughout the passage highlighting the intricacy and length of time that goes with ~~creating the~~ making the pattern on her hand with the ~~term~~ 'hennaing' (a reference to Indian culture) and 'icing' (which can be interpreted as a ~~reference~~ connection to British baking) conveying how the action is almost symbolic of Alvi reconnecting with her culture ~~and~~

which,
^ like the action, she finds takes a long period of time. Moreover,
the continuous allusion to touch - ^ 'squeezes a wet brown
line from a nozzle', with a 'peacock spreading its lines across
my (her) palm' - ~~suggest~~ suggest the ^{profound} ~~deep~~ sensual pleasure
and comfort Alvi receives from the action, with the
'spreading' ~~of the peacock~~ of the 'peacock ~~across~~ ... across
her palm' again being symbolic of how her Indian
heritage is reignited within her by the action. ~~this~~

~~These~~ This portrayal of strong feelings of pride in her
cultural ~~rather~~ homeland culminates with the ^{short} ~~emphatic~~ phrase
'I have new brown veins', which emphatically presents
the love that Alvi has once again found ^{for her heritage} ~~India~~ - she
cherishes the experience deeply.

Alvi also presents strong feelings through her comparisons
between the culture of India and ~~the West~~ - her
natural/background home - and the West - what has become
her home, ~~through the use of~~ specific terminology.
Alvi outlines how 'dummies in shop-fronts tilt and
stare with their Western peers', with the use of the dynamic
verbs ~~connoting~~ 'tilt' and 'stare', ~~which personify the~~,
= personifying the dummies and connoting ~~an attempt~~
~~to intrude and~~ intrusiveness. This, along with the
'Western peers' the 'dummy' represent, suggests Alvi's
strong feeling that the West ~~are~~ and its culture are
trying to penetrate and interfere with the traditional

Indian 'bazaar'; with the ~~use of the~~ colloquial term 'perms' conveying ~~the writer's~~ Alvi's discontent^{/annoyance} at this. Her strong feelings on the subject are highlighted further through ~~the~~ the ~~3~~ reference to 'curtain cloth and sofa cloth canopy me' - the emotive verb 'canopy' connotes an embrace or protection from something and directly points out how Alvi is comforted and shielded from the western culture she left behind ~~to~~. Her reconnection with her culture is so ~~absolute~~^{with such strong emotion and feelings} that she seeks for it to envelop her and never let her go.

Strong feelings are also presented in 'An unknown Girl' through the use of structural devices by Alvi such as varying sentence structures ~~and~~ and the utilising of the form and nature of the ~~3~~ ^{Passage} ~~part~~ (it being a reflection of events from ~~the~~ Alvi's ~~point~~ point of view). Alvi ~~is~~ makes use of longer, more detailed lines and sentences to ~~portray~~^{emphasise} the vividness and vibrancy of the bazaar, often including colour imagery - she portrays in the first lines of the passage that the bazaar is 'studded with neon' and later describes how 'as a little air catches my shadow-stitched kameez a peacock spreads its lines' and 'colours leave the street float up in balloons'. This detailed setting of the bazaar ~~along with~~ ~~the~~ highlights how the experience is like a dream that is ending too quickly for Alvi. This is supported by the short, powerful line 'It will fade in a week' (referring to

the henna) which conveys the ^{strong feelings of} ~~the~~ ¹ disappointment Alvi experiences at realising she will eventually return to the West and creates poignance. This sense of finality/a dream that must end is drawn upon by the continual use of the first person singular ~~in the passage~~ 'I' in the passage which reveals how personal and meaningful the experience has been for Alvi - this even becomes 'I'll' by the closing lines as the strong feeling of having to move on ~~in Alvi's~~ is felt by Alvi yet she cannot help 'longing for the unknown girl in the neon bazaar'.

In Conclusion

Alvi has a very strong message and feelings within the passage that where an individual comes from should never be forgotten or denied but should be celebrated and understood as much as possible. Through her festival-like presentation of the bazaar and her personal revelations of in fact not wanting to return to ~~the~~ her new life in the West she presents strong feelings of belonging and identity as something that ~~often~~ ^{often} lies beneath - as in her case - with the 'unknown girl hennaing my hand' - it ~~is~~ ^{sometimes} takes a memorable and comforting experience to ~~set~~ ^{set free} such feelings.

The response starts with definite focus on the question, immediately exploring the precise action of 'hennaing' and 'icing' as a symbolic reconnecting of the two cultures within the poet. This is then analysed in a perceptive way: while the evidence and the process of the precise action is supported with selected detailed references, the analytical focus is always on the strong feelings triggered 'profound sensual pleasure', 'comfort', 'Indian heritage reignited', 'pride culminates', 'love once again found', 'cherishes the experience'. The next paragraph is confidently and convincingly interpreting the clash of the two cultural influences through the 'dummies with Western perms' in the traditional Indian Bazaar'. The focus of the question is firmly adhered to by clarifying the feelings of intrusiveness, 'West... penetrat[ing] and interfer[ing]', 'Alvi's discontent and annoyance'. The interpretation and connotations of 'canopy' are perhaps overreaching a bit, but still persuasive and convincing 'embrace or protection, comforted, shielded...'. There is confidence in points made about how language and structure are used by the poet to present strong feelings, with a personal and assured response. The poem's form is considered from a perspective of it being a reflection which is then linked to the experience 'ending too quickly' 'like a dream', creating a 'strong feeling of disappointment'. The conclusion is an apt and persuasive summary of points.

This response meets the first bullet point in Level 5. The candidate definitely shows perceptive understanding of the poem. The interpretation of ideas and information is persuasive and point made are clarified (Level 5). There is evidence of persuasive, apt selection (Level 5). For AO2 a very slightly less perceptive point (in comparison to the others) is on the structure and form of the poem, but it is still firmly focused on the strong feelings. The selection of references is discriminating and clarifies the points being made (Level 5). The personal interpretation is very evident and convincing.

Question 2

This was the least popular of the writing responses and examiners noted a range of responses to this question being offered. Many candidates were able to offer ideas about a time that they or someone else made something.

Responses showed a range of things that could be made, for example concrete items such as a cake, something made at school, apps, ancient swords, art, music, computer games, food for a family gathering or abstract things, for example friendships, mistakes, 'something of myself' in difficult times such as examinations or other tests, in sport or other competitions, in making a decision or doing something never done before. Most responses tried to 'hook the reader' but at the lower end of the mark scheme responses were a little formulaic, for example starting with 'This is about a time I made something' and then going into step-by-step about how they made something. This tended to make the writing rather mechanical and did not enable scope for descriptive writing. Most responses, however, showed crafting of the story and added touches of description.

one rainy day me and my mate had nothing to do so we were looking for something to do. ~~now~~ suddenly we found a big pile of scrap wood and we decided to make a motocross jump out of it. ~~the~~

so I was on duty for cutting the wood and he was on duty for building the ramp we were planning for it to be about 7ft tall as it started to come together and it had finished cutting all the planks of wood up.

A few last screws were going in and we had a funny functional 7ft takeoff and a

8ft landing with about a 4ft
cal in between the landing
and the takeoff. We took the
jump down the end of his
Greenhouse ~~to~~ where his
field is and we set it up
ready for testing.

As I ran down the other
end of the Greenhouse to get
the motocross bike I started the
engine to warm it up before
flying it.

I swung my leg over the
bike and started to fly down
his Greenhouse and into the
field. As I gave my mate the
bike ready to try it he started
to build up speed and he flew
over the jump easily and landed
perfectly.



This response is shaped around the creation and testing of a motocross jump. Overall, there is evidence of full Level 2 achievement in AO4. The response communicates in a broadly appropriate way. The tone is straightforward, for example 'So I was on duty for cutting the wood and he was on duty for building the ramp...' There is some grasp of the purpose and the intended reader. All of the bullet points in Level 2 are met for AO4.

In AO5 the 'best-fit' is just into Level 3. This is a mixture of Levels, so 'best-fit' is essential. There is accurate spelling (the first section, for example, is fully accurate) and some varied vocabulary, for example *suddenly*, *functional* (although not correctly spelt), *greenhouse*, *perfectly*. Sentence structures are slightly repetitive, however, and the punctuation is used only with some control and a lack of variation. Ideas are expressed and ordered. They are appropriate and connected, which reflects Level 3 for this part of the first bullet. The first bullet in the mark scheme is mostly met in Level 3 (there needs to be more development of ideas). The second is met in Level 2/3 – there is some varied vocabulary and accurate spelling. The third bullet point is more Level 1 – the sentence structures are repetitive, and there is basic control of punctuation. On balance, therefore, a mark at the bottom of Level 3 is achieved.

Question 3

Examiners again read a range of responses, with more candidates responding to this question than Question 2. Many candidates used this as an opportunity to reminisce about holidays or key achievements, real or imagined. Key advice for candidates writing is to think about how to conclude imaginative writing, as finding a way to draw these to an appropriate close was sometimes tricky for some candidates. The content varied, with some very interesting ideas, for example ballet, plane crash, bears, first love/kiss, making a friend. Some memories tended to be sad or had death as part of them. In the majority of cases candidates could reach Level 3 and above by outlining the excitement felt visiting a place, something of what they did and returning home with the memory.

One examiner noted:

'There were some lovely reflective responses to this question, where candidates had thought carefully about instances in their lives that would impact them in the future.'

Another highlighted:

'Quite a few took this as a prompt for clearly fictional writing (fantasy, horror etc.) and so this prompt really opened up a huge array of possibilities and could be pushed as far as candidates wanted to!'

There were some responses that really interpreted the question in the ideas offered, for example writing about uncontrollable climate change, the Berlin wall coming down, Suffragettes, thriller CIA, adoption of an Indian street girl, safaris, storms or moving to a new country. Some responses were developed from changed within families. The range of ideas shows the creativity of candidates, which should be credited.

The less successful responses fell into the trap of listing events at the expense of developing description and intrigue for the reader. Qualities of high-level writing include the sense of purpose and audience – there needs to be a response to the actual question, not a prepared question, and thought of how the reader will react.

My ^Greatest ^Memory

The memories rushing through my ~~brain~~ head. I have many great memories but my greatest ~~one~~ memory? ~~is well...~~ I ~~am still~~ Well... I am still searching for it.

I have one memory that is above all but I would say I'm too young to call it my greatest. You wanna hear it?

Too bad you haven't got a choice, right let's begin. It was ~~in the summer of 2016~~ October, 2016 when it all began and my life decided to ~~change~~ change... Forever!

It was Tuesday the 18th of October which was the day I was very unwell. I was non-stop drinking and going toilet to which my mum thought I had a water infection and booked the doctors. It was as if I had opened the flood gates, ~~and water was~~ it was annoying, detrimental and ~~is~~ unrelenting.

If I ~~didn't~~ didn't have a drink every five minutes ~~my~~ my mouth would be dryer than the Sahara Desert.

The ~~to~~ time was now ~~3~~ three thirty in the afternoon and I would never have thought this illness would ~~be~~ be circum to this horrific, ~~X~~ heartbreaking and heartwrenching news.

The doctors ~~to~~ did a blood test ~~is~~ on me and once it came back they looked at me with a stare that could crush my heart. They spoke with a sad and ~~sorry~~ pitiful tone and said... you have been diagnosed with type 1 diabetes.

My heart ~~is~~ dropped suddenly. I couldn't ~~bear~~ bare the news as my tears rushed down the side of ~~me~~ my face. I thought I was going to live a ~~complete~~ completely different life to my ~~family~~ family and friends but nearly six years later I have lived a completely normal life with just a few ~~tweaks~~ changes.

That ~~new~~ memory will live with me forever. I suppose it has to considering I can't get rid of it.



For some candidates their greatest memory might not be an obvious one such as the holiday of a lifetime – this is the case with this response.

The response has a witty opening with a mixed tone where the candidate seems to be getting warmed up with the direction of their writing (they are perhaps trying to decide on a memory to choose). They are attempting to create a level of tension and using a wide vocabulary: *detrimental, unrelenting*. This sentence is also crafted with the deliberate use of a triplet. There is a very clear description of their mouth with clear attempts at crafting to build tension and use of language to try for effect in their employment of alliteration and further evidence of a wide vocabulary: *heart wrenching*. Despite the mis-spelling of succumb [circum] this does not detract from overall meaning and further crafting evident with 'stare that could crush my heart...pitiful tone.' It is clear that this candidate understands writing to engage the reader.

The candidate has thought about organisation with developed and connected ideas; they introduce a problem, diagnose an illness, describe the impact of the illness ending with a resolution which contrasts the initial impact of the diagnosis.

For AO4 the response meets Level 3 securely. It communicates clearly, with a clear sense of purpose and understanding of the intended reader. There is appropriate use of form, tone and register. It is secure enough to sit on the border with 11, but not successful enough to move into Level 4.

For AO5 the response was just awarded into Level 4 because it uses wide, selective vocabulary; it does not go further into Level 4 as a range of punctuation is not used to manage sentence structures for deliberate effect. Information is connected and developed appropriately with structural and grammatical features and paragraphing used to make the meaning clear. Level 3 is met fully, with that wide, selective vocabulary in places just moving the mark into Level 4.

Chosen question number: Question 2 ✘ Question 3 ✘ Question 4 ✘

~~Christmas is a magical time. The joy of celebration, laughter echoing through crowds, smites splitting.~~

People always say that nervousness ~~was~~ ^{is} a powerful tool. "It shows you care!" They'd say. It makes us human, it's something we're unable to control.

I've tried everything to shut mine down. Everything to push and squeeze and force the ~~was~~ anxiety back down into a ~~box~~ ^{vault} deep within my chest. The previous rush of adrenaline that exhilarated my muscles and shivered down my spine was merely a trickle. Barely enough to stop me collapsing.

Two firm hands on my chalk-covered shoulders shook me out of my stupor.

"Come on, final stretch."

Two more harsh slaps on my shoulders revitalise my strength. The light disappeared as my eyelids fluttered closed and I inhaled oxygen through my nose in a heavy inhale.

"The next lifter up to the platform will be Georgia Arthur on her final clean and jerk attempt."

My eyes snapped open. Light flooded my retina. Nerves rattled my brain.

I stepped towards the platform, ^{and} clapping ^{ed} away the excess white powder ^{that} coating ^{ed} my hands. My legs were sturdy with each step I took, ~~never~~ ^{never} faltering.

Don't let them see your fear, don't even acknowledge it, I thought to myself. ^{As I} scanning ^{ed} the crowd, ^{all} eyes met mine with fervor. The ^{silent} encouragement instilled determination back into my body.

~~As I~~ I reached the bar, the cool metal biting into the flesh of my palms, as I gripped it firmly, ^{and brought} ~~it~~ it back to rest against

My shins.

Inhale.

As soon as the ^{fresh} oxygen had settled into my lungs I lurched upwards, ~~dragging~~ ^{whilst I dragged} the bar with me. The bar followed its path up and along my body before it reached my chest and crashed down onto me - ~~crushing~~ ^{it} ~~me~~ ^{ed} me into the floor. My thighs burnt with the strain of pushing into an upright position, ^{they} relentlessly protested against the exertion.

Push, push, push!

As I reached a standing position, greedy breathfuls of air raced towards my lungs, the ice-cold bar ~~bit~~ ^{bit} into my throat. With a final dip - and - drive, I forced the bar up and above my head and shook with the tension required to keep it there.

BEEP.

The buzzer sounded. I dropped the bar to the floor. A disbelieving smile ^{over} split my face as

the light behind the timer flashed green. It was a good lift.

I'd done it.

My body spun back around to face my coach. His face was lit up with joy, white ~~making~~ ^{made} an appearance ~~between~~ between his split lips and his eyes twinkled with pride.

Happiness jolted through my body and tears of disbelief sprung to my eyes. ~~the~~

"-British Champion!"

I barely caught the end of the announcer's statement before the crowd burst into deafening



This is a good example of a top Level 4 response, doing everything in Level 4 but not getting into Level 5. The candidate has a secure realisation of the purpose of this writing: this is evident in the crafting that can be seen throughout this piece, from the intriguing start, the building of tension ('My eyes snapped open. Light flooded my retina. Nerves rattled my brain') and the one-word sentences and paragraphs. The candidate understands that assessment objective AO4 is focused on the audience and creating maximum effect (one way you can see this is by the number of times the candidate has crossed out a word or added a word, trying to build a picture for the intended reader). The tone is deliberately intriguing and focused on drawing the reader in from the very beginning, using 'medias res' as a 'hook' to start the story. A slightly rushed ending, ending on an unfinished sentence is a shame, but does not detract from what the candidate has achieved. It communicates successfully, but does not have the subtlety that it would need for Level 5.

For AO5 the ideas are managed. A whole range of structural and grammatical features are used across the text, for example short sentences/paragraphs, repetition and patterning and reported speech used cohesively for effect. Wide and selective vocabulary is evident, *exhilarated, vault, chalk-covered, instilled, relentlessly*, mostly spelt accurately. Punctuation makes the meaning clear and is also shaped for deliberate effect.

Question 4

This was the most popular writing question, and examiners felt that the quality of written communication was the highest in this question with an abundance of controlled figurative language and descriptive language. It was felt that candidates really enjoyed this question and responded very well to the images.

Recurring themes here were where supernatural beings attacked fair-goers, an armed attack on fairgoers, or at the simpler level a person becomes separated from their group at fair. Many responses featured disasters of one kind or another, often featuring rollercoaster crashes, lost children, monster/zombie invasions or gunmen on the loose. Some, more obviously influenced by various films or games, were perhaps less successful.

A number of candidates had employed a cyclical structure and, at the highest levels there was some developed description and the use of the senses to establish the atmosphere. Sustained tone and register were discriminators. Use of sensory description, especially of the food and smells featured prominently but could also lead to an overloading of adjectives. There were many responses that made a very good job of describing the anticipation of going to the festival.

As is often the case with unplanned stories, the longest responses were less successful, feeling lacking in organisation, unstructured and often reducing in quality through the piece. The best responses were often quite tightly planned across just a few pages, setting the scene effectively, describing their senses and creating an appropriate tone from the beginning.

The better responses tended to describe the experience of being on one of the more daring rides at the festival, conveying thoughts and feelings effectively throughout. The most effective answers controlled the narrative well and contained interesting description.

Chosen question number: **Question 2** **Question 3** **Question 4**

The festival was crowded that night. As I brushed past happy faces, our shoulders bumping off one another. The hot ~~summer~~ August night warmed my skin ~~as~~ as I emerged into the festival. It was blinding. Bright lights studded the area & like rhinestones with flashes of colour. ~~The~~ Sweet smells filled my nose. Screams, laughter and chatter echoed through the carnival. As I look up I see the rush of a rollercoaster speed past me as the cries of people onboard grow more distant. Past the orange-coloured tracks was the ink ~~the~~ black sky glittered with stars, gleaming from above. ~~The~~

The smell of popcorn fills the air as I lift my ~~it~~ closer to my mouth. The sweetness fills my mouth with warmth ~~as~~ before I swallow. I look over to you to see the delight across ~~a~~ your face as you scoop a ~~sbu~~ load off the mountain of popcorn into your mouth. The sight of your complete delight warms my heart and spreads a smile across my face.

Hand in hand we make our way past the queuing crowd, past the bumpercars, past the teacups and saucers. Our eyes wandering feverishly taking in our surroundings. With so much to take in, we aimlessly collided with people, also transfixed by the festival. ~~We come~~

We come to a stop. The queue continued to form behind us as a group were sat and belted up^z, then launched off into the distance as we are left ~~with~~ with their screams of joy. After a while, our legs ~~stir~~ stinging^v with exhaustion we make our way up to the platform and into the sticky ~~st~~ seats. I tentatively check my belt to preoccupy my nerves. The buzz in the air was deafening. The staff dressed in every colour checked our buckles giving them a shaking. I look over to you to see your utter most excitement. With ~~an~~ reassuring smile you calm me as the staff inform us we are ready to count down.

3... 2... click!

And we are off with a shudder of the carriage.

Screams escaped by lips as air catches in my curls. The blow of the wind felt freeing, shrill

Screams filled my ears. The rush of adrenaline washed over my body like a tidal wave. As our arms waving ~~test~~ above our heads, I look below to see the small festival get more distant away. The tiny lights flashed at me. It was beautiful. ~~The~~ Magical.

As the cart began to slow we reached uphill. We suspended mid air. I felt on top of the world. Just as my nerves reached their highest point, rising inside of my me, we dropped out of the sky. The rush. The shock. The energy was a completely different feeling.

Now we are driving away from ~~me~~ a night I will always remember. In the passenger seat, I twist around to see the bright lights and the happy laughter fade into the distance. Into the darkness. Into the night.



The story crafted here is effective and successful. The candidate uses the opening line well, and the variation in tense in the story is managed well – we assume for effect. There are some aspects of the story that are not as convincing, for example some of the description, but, overall, the story engages and draws in the reader with sensual language that reminds us of the poem from the Reading section of the paper. The setting is deliberately crafted at the start and the sights, sounds and smells are effectively created. The mystery of who ‘you’ are is effective, creating an intimate feel to the story and creating a touching closeness in description such as ‘to see the delight across your face as you scoop a load off the mountain of popcorn into your mouth’. The idea of tenderness and love is very effectively shared, as is the idea of the connection between the couple and the ‘feverish’, ‘transfixing’ effect of the festival. The effective description is sustained, with ‘our legs numb with exhaustion’, and ‘I tentatively check my belt to preoccupy my nerves’. Short sentences support the successful creation of excitement and tension, for example ‘We come to a stop’ and ‘3...2... click!’

Level 4 is met for AO4, with successful communication of a tender, shared experience and secure realisation of purpose and the expectations of the intended reader, who feels almost voyeuristic in sharing this tender moment. There is effective use of form, tone and register, even with some parts where the description is simpler, for example ‘The buzz in the air was deafening’. A mark of 15 is achieved.

In AO5 the mark is secure in Level 4. Ideas are managed, and features are used deliberately – this first bullet point is met in Level 4 in the main. The second bullet varies between Level 4 and Level 3 – there is wide and selective vocabulary, for example *emerged, echoed, feverishly, surroundings, transfixed, launched, preoccupy, adrenaline* but spelling, however, is not always accurate. They are really trying to manage ideas and the meaning is clear. The candidate uses accurate punctuation, with some varied punctuation used, and they attempt to adapt sentence structures as appropriate. A mark in the middle of Level 4 is appropriate – a mark of 9.

The festival was crowded that night. Dusk blushed and darkened, as a candid moon slipped out from behind the crow clouds.

The sea breathed quietly tonight, ~~as~~ ^a sprawled ~~to~~ darkness rolled in and out; it slipped over beaches and lapped at harbour walls. Further along the ~~west~~ coast, cliffs turned ragged and ^{vacuous} rocks jutted into the writhing inky mass, waves churning with a malevolent energy of its own. Rags Rags of silver moonlight cascading ^{ed} down, from the ghostly galleon, as they pooled and spilled across the dark sea.

Furtively, I drew my veil closer down, glancing every so often around me, as I ~~we~~ weaved through the dense thickets of people. A cacophony of young children ~~squeal~~ shrieked in pure delight, the sound wrenching my heart. Once upon a time ~~as~~ I had been so happy and free ~~as~~...

"Stop it," I fervently muttered, pulling back my traitorous mind from the solace of memories. I had to eat. It had been days since I last had a morsal of food. Patting my long cloak, I felt the lump of a stolen loaf crackle. Endless rows of food stalls abundant with colours, lights, tantalising smells and toys, beckoned to me; however I continued on. ~~It~~

Debauching from the festival, a huge sigh left my mouth, the swirling puff coiling in the cool night air. Staring up at the moon, I opened my ~~bread~~ devoured the bread.

Click clack. Click clack.

My heart stopped.

In the distance, a looming figure ~~for~~ ^{ed}trudging up the ~~pe~~ alley. ~~Knitting~~ his spider-like hands together, the ~~transal~~ translucent webs of his fingers glowed ominously in the silver light. Muttering manically to himself, his long nails ~~raked a~~ stretched across the decking, the baleful sound echoing throughout the still night air.

"Little crawling, little crawling, a black eyed crow," ~~the~~ the voice was off-pitch and froze my insides.

Pressing myself to the harbour walls, I gripped my knees closer to ^{my chest} me, in the perfunctory attempt to press closer to ^{wall} closer. I must not breath. Not one breath.

Flash!

My body froze staring up in pure silent horror...

Catacombs of inky madness swirling around glared at me, twinkling with a hellish pleasure. The devilish smile curled up fiendishly, protruding a ~~sten~~ stench which was ~~other~~ deathly. It was the scent of a hundred corpses in a morgue.

"Hello little crawling," he cooed, raking a blood filled talon down my ~~from~~ trembling neck. ~~take~~ He leared closer, never leaving eye contact and snuffed my neck.

"Your blood is calling for me! Your blood is pounding for me! Your blood is mine to feast on!" The cackling rose, as his grimace spread wider.

God. ~~Realisation~~ Realisation flooded me like a wild temper, this vampire was going to eat me. He was ~~the~~ predator and ~~I~~ I was pray.

I had to get back to the festival there was no other way.

Bang.

A spectacle of dazzling patterns bloomed across the night sky, uncutting ^{ferns} fears of bright purple and pink and yellows, smiled down sending its glowing rays dancing

around the clouds. Stunned, I looked up and for a brief moment my heart uncurled. It was beautiful.

The man, the monster whatever he was ~~was~~ screamed, it was a blood ~~curdling~~ curdling, spine freezing, scream of pain, as he clawed his eyes ~~desperately~~. Of course! It all made sense. Vampires are allergic to light.

Hope rose like an ~~in~~ incoming tide and roared, ~~was~~ gripping the ~~the~~ clots of moss on the harbour wall, I kicked him into the water.

A churning wave devoured him whole and purred to itself, satisfied.

The festival had saved me, I ran back towards the busy crowds of people looking like a madwomen, but I did not care. I was free.

"Ebo Excuse me young lady, are you quite alright?" a kind ^{gentlemen} ~~police~~ asked. Opening my mouth to answer, my words ~~fattered~~ faltered.

Dawn blushed and lightened, then suddenly darkened again.

falty
faltered



This is a well-crafted piece and it is sophisticated in places. There is a feeling of mystery built up with the focus moving from the festival to the darkness of the cliffs and the reference to the veil. This continues throughout the piece in the subtlety of the characterisation, 'crawling' and 'He was predator and I was prey'. The piece also benefits from the setting being deliberately crafted with vivid description, 'writhing inky mass, waves churning with malevolent energy' and the linking back to the festival lights.

Level 5 is met for AO4 in the perceptive and, at times, subtle communication. However, there is also a lack of subtlety in places, for example, spelling out to the reader that vampires hate light. Though the cyclical nature can be rewarded it is not clear, the use of 'blusted' is open to interpretation and neither is the introduction of another character at the end. There is a sense of sharp focus on the feelings of the protagonist 'My body froze staring up in pure horror' and 'Hope rose like an incoming tide and roared'. Sophistication can be seen in the extended metaphor of the tide as her hope and the wave devouring her attacker. There is style over substance in some places, for example 'ghostly galleon'. A mark in the middle of level 5 is appropriate – 17.

For AO5 the response achieves a mark of 11. The candidate manages information and ideas, with structural and grammatical features used cohesively and deliberately across the text (Level 4). Extensive vocabulary is used with rare spelling errors, for example *cacophony/translucent/catacombs* (Level 5) but not always strategically, for example, 'Debauching'. Punctuation is accurate and precise. The candidate uses a range of sentence structures accurately and selectively to achieve particular effects. A mark of 11 is 'best-fit' here.

Section B

For this part of the assessment, examiners felt that 'students really engaged with the topics and there was a sense of enjoyment in the writing'. It is worth noting that examiners always enjoy reading the writing responses, with one saying 'There were some lovely vocabulary choices clearly evoking the sense of the moment...the students should be proud of what they produced.' Another noted that for Question 4 'Candidates seemed like they'd had a really good time responding to this one!'

The least successful responses were fairly basic, with straightforward use of tone, style and register and audience and purpose not always clear. At this level candidates tended to express but not always connect ideas and information, with limited use of structural and grammatical features and paragraphing. Pleasingly, there were few responses that only achieved Level 1 and where they did this was mostly because these candidates hardly wrote anything, offering a basic response, or the sentences did not make sense at all.

The majority of candidates tended to at least have straightforward and at best appropriate use of tone, style and register, selecting material and stylistic or rhetorical devices to suit audience and purpose. In the main candidates tended to connect, but not always develop, ideas and information, with some structural and grammatical features and paragraphing. In some cases, the writing lacked development to move higher into the mark scheme for AO4. For the majority of responses the use of vocabulary and syntax tended to be at least appropriate. Less successful responses used repetitive structures and language and at times limited devices to vague simile/metaphor, use of short sentences, questions and exclamations for effect.

In the best responses, candidates tended to have subtle use of tone, style and register, managing ideas and stylistic or rhetorical devices to suit audience and purpose. At the higher levels candidates tended to manage, but not always manipulate, ideas and information, with a range of structural and grammatical features and paragraphing. Responses at the highest levels had some creative ideas and conscious, successful crafting. The best responses tended to have some selective vocabulary used for specific effect rather than just to demonstrate knowledge of particular multi-syllabic words.

The assessment objectives for these tasks effectively discriminated the quality of responses. Advice to centres would be to encourage candidates to avoid thinking they need to write a whole novel or even short extract in the time available – they need to have a clear organisation and direction in mind, and to perhaps not 'over-season' the pieces with vocabulary and syntax.

The main areas that discriminated these responses were:

- whether candidates could meet both parts of the first part of bullet one in the mark scheme for AO5 – for example they often expressed ideas to achieve in Level 2, but these ideas lacked the order for the second part of that bullet. In Level 3, they may have connected ideas but not developed them.
- the success of tone, style and register in AO4.
- the spelling of basic vocabulary in AO5.
- the accuracy of punctuation and use of varied punctuation in AO5.
- the use of a range of sentence structures for AO5.

Varying sentence structure and punctuation were areas centres had focused on: varying the way sentences begin; more use of subordinate clauses to begin complex sentences; effective use of one-word sentences and one-sentence paragraphs to demonstrate conscious crafting. Some candidates attempted to use ambitious vocabulary while some seemed to steer away from ambitious vocabulary in order to maintain accuracy. A key message to centres is to **focus on crafting and organisation whatever the nature of the task. This was a common weakness running through all but the very best answers.** The less successful answers were formulaic, showing a lack of organisation and often demonstrated a lack of planning and direction. Be ambitious in the structure, vocabulary and range of ideas and try to be creative and original. There was some excellent description and evidence of crafting at all levels.

In terms of register it was clear that the majority of the candidates knew how to write an imaginative piece. Examiners noted that lack of control could let candidates down and that control of language was also a problem at times.

Some comments on AO5 from examiners include:

- ‘All students really did try with varying sentence structure, usually a short sentence or two. Most tried to vary punctuation using question marks, exclamation marks and ellipsis.’
- ‘Overall, the quality of the writing was really good, spelling and punctuation were generally accurate, and most responses were organised into clear and coherent paragraphs.’
- ‘The majority of students had tried to use sophisticated vocabulary; even lower-level responses showed evidence of ambition.’
- ‘Lower-level responses tended to lack a range of sentence structure and a range of punctuation.’
- ‘there was the occasional candidate who was obviously articulate and tried to employ a range of devices but tended to over-write, which sometimes left a number of disjointed but well-articulated sentences that lacked the ‘flow’ of a narrative.’

Paper Summary

Based on their performance on the paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

- Ensure you have studied the poetry and prose texts in the Anthology fully and use the examination time to remind yourself of the text, not re-read it.
- Read the question carefully and make sure you are answering **this** question, not telling the examiner what you know about the text you have studied. The selection needs to be relevant to the question you are being asked, in this case how the writer creates strong feelings.
- For AO2 (language and structure), make sure you are offering ideas about how language and structure are used. Many of you were able to give examples, but sometimes you did not offer points about how the examples were used.
- For AO2 try to cover points on both language and structure, commenting on the different techniques that have been used by the writer and how they link to the overall topic of the question, in this case how the writer creates strong feelings.
- When you are writing, always think about your reader, what information and ideas you want to develop and how you want the reader to react at different parts of your writing; then choose the best words, phrases or techniques available to you to achieve those effects.
- Think carefully about how you will begin to write so that it is engaging for your reader from the very start.
- As you begin to write, know where you will end. This will help you to write in a manner that is cohesive and coherent for your reader.
- Take care throughout with accuracy: spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- In writing, focus on crafting and organisation, whatever the nature of the task.
- Be ambitious in your structure, vocabulary and range of ideas and try to be creative and original. We are often incredibly impressed with your creativity and ability to write in such an imaginative way in the time given.
- Always respond to the questions set, not a question you have prepared – this does not often lead to effective responses.

Grade boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/results-certification/grade-boundaries.html>

