Example Candidate Responses

Cambridge International AS and A Level
Literature in English

9695
Paper 6
Introduction

The main aim of this booklet is to exemplify standards for those teaching Cambridge International AS and A Level Literature in English (9695), and to show how different levels of candidates’ performance relate to the subject’s curriculum and assessment objectives.

In this booklet candidate responses have been chosen to exemplify a range of answers. Each response is accompanied by a brief commentary explaining the strengths and weaknesses of the answers.

For ease of reference the following format for each component has been adopted:

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<tr>
<th>Question</th>
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Each question is followed by an extract of the mark scheme used by examiners. This, in turn, is followed by examples of marked candidate responses, each with an examiner comment on performance. Comments are given to indicate where and why marks were awarded, and how additional marks could have been obtained. In this way, it is possible to understand what candidates have done to gain their marks and what they still have to do to improve their marks.

Past papers, Examiner Reports and other teacher support materials are available on Teacher Support at https://teachers.cie.org.uk

There are some changes to the format of mark schemes for examinations from 2016. Bands have been changed to Levels and level descriptors have been inverted so that the highest level is Level 6 and the lowest level is Level 1. New specimen mark schemes for examinations from 2016 are available on https://teachers.cie.org.uk
A Cambridge International A Level qualification in Literature in English can be achieved either as a staged assessment over different examination series or in one examination series.

Once Advanced Subsidiary has been achieved, inform Cambridge if the candidate wishes to take the Advanced Level – this notification is not required in advance of achieving the AS qualification.

**Advanced Subsidiary (AS) candidates take:**

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Assessment at a glance

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Dictionaries may **not** be used.

Texts are **not** allowed in the examination room.

Teachers are reminded that the latest syllabus is available on our public website at [www.cie.org.uk](http://www.cie.org.uk) and Teacher Support at [https://teachers.cie.org.uk](https://teachers.cie.org.uk)
Paper 6 – 20th Century Writing

Question 1a

Mark scheme, all questions

Using the mark bands

Place the answer in a band first. Look for the ‘best fit’ of the answer into a band. An answer needs to show evidence of most but not necessarily ALL of the qualities described in a band, in order to be placed in that band. Then award a mark for the relative position of the answer within the band. Candidates may address the question in many different ways. Do not expect any particular focus or approach and do not penalise answers for leaving out a particular focus. Reward what is there, showing what you are rewarding, in your comments. Consider all strands and weigh up the performance as a whole in placing the answer in a band, then show that you have done so in the summative comment, e.g. Sound K of texts, some evidence of U but mostly narrative, occasional evidence of P, mainly clear C.

Assessment Objectives:

- Ability to respond to texts in the three main forms (Prose, Poetry and Drama) of different types and from different cultures;
- Understanding of the ways in which writers’ choices of form, structure and language shape meanings;
- Ability to produce informed independent opinions and judgements on literary texts;
- Ability to communicate clearly the knowledge, understanding and insight appropriate to literary study.

Each answer is marked out of 25, in accordance with the General Marking Criteria below.

Each band is divided into strands corresponding to the Assessment Objectives – Knowledge, Understanding, Personal Response, Communication.
Mark scheme, continued

Band 6  0 – 5

K Evidence of some general knowledge of the text which may be narrative based and may contain errors, rarely relevant to the question and with little or no relevant quotation or selection from the text.

U There may be little or no evidence of understanding of form, structure and language, with some appropriate points made in response to the question. These will be limited and tend to be restricted to plot and characters – the latter treated very much as ‘real’ people.

P There may be some signs of personal response, not developed into an argument and not fully supported from the text.

C Communication will be insecure. Expression may be weak with some breakdown in communication. Structure may be lacking: answers are likely to be partial, undeveloped, narrative commentary in approach; with the assertion of simple points rather than progressive lines of argument.

O Others’ opinions may be referred to in passing.

Answers to passage-based questions are likely to be seriously unbalanced, with an emphasis on narrative or paraphrase. Passages are likely to have been only partially understood and tentatively located contextually, with little coherent sense of the relationship between textual part and whole. There will be little or no mention or consideration of the literary features of the passage.

Band 5  6 – 9 Work of a basic standard

K Evidence of some limited ability to use knowledge of the text to address the question, with occasional use of supporting references or quotation.

U Evidence of some limited understanding of ways in which writers’ choices of structure, form and language shape meanings.

P Evidence of some personal response to the text but not fully supported.

C Expression will be basically clear. There may be the occasional confused passage of writing. However, there will be no sustained loss of communication. There may be a simple structure to the answer with some evidence of an argument, which may lack coherence, with some repetition, assertion and relapse into narrative summary/paraphrase. There may be a tendency to drift from relevant discussion into material of tangential significance.

O Mentions other opinions, perhaps those expressed in the question, and makes some attempt to consider different views of a text.

In answers to passage-based questions there will be some evidence of understanding of how part relates to whole. Treatment of the given extracts may well be sketchy or overlong and undiscriminating. Comment on the wider textual issues is likely to be general. There may be a lack of balance between passage and whole text. There will be some limited consideration of the literary features of the text.
Mark scheme, continued

Band 4  10 – 13  Solid work

K  Evidence of some ability to use relevant knowledge of the text to address the question.
U  Evidence of clear understanding of some ways in which writers' choices of structure, form and language shape meanings, which may be partial and restricted to the more obvious aspects of the text.
P  Evidence of personal response to the text, with the beginnings of a personal view or interpretation, relevant to the question and supported from the text.
C  Expression will be mostly clear and appropriate with a clear, simple structure to the answer. Argument will be basically coherent, and assertive in tone. There is likely to be some reliance on paraphrase and narrative summary. Articulates simple ideas with clarity but there may be some imprecision and clumsiness of expression in dealing with more complex concepts. There may be occasional obscurity in the presentation of ideas and responses.
O  Considers other opinions, perhaps those expressed in the question, weighs up different views of a text.

In answers to passage-based questions, work may be lacking in balance of approach, with over-concentration on the given extracts and little attempt to explore the broader textual issues. Conversely some answers may be in effect general essays, with insufficient treatment of the passages. There may be evidence of limited ability to negotiate between parts of a text and its whole. There will be some consideration of the literary features of the text with analysis of the features mentioned likely to be partial or restricted.

Band 3  14 – 17  Competent work

K  Evidence of competence in selecting relevant knowledge of the text to address with some pertinent use of quotation and direct references.
U  Evidence of sound understanding of some aspects of ways in which writers' choices of structure, form and language shape meanings, with some analysis and appreciation of literary methods, effects, and contexts.
P  Evidence of personal response relevant to the question, supported from the text.
C  Expression will be clear and generally accurate. Structure will be sound – material coherently organised with occasional insights. Candidates will express intelligent, straightforward ideas clearly, though there may be occasional loss of fluency with points not always strongly connected.
O  Considers other opinions, weighs up different views with support from the text.

In answers to passage-based questions, work will cover both the passage and its relation to the whole text, and there will be some sense of a relationship between the text as a whole and its constituent parts. There will be competent appreciation of the effects of the literary features of the text and the analysis is supported by relevant examples from the passage.
Mark scheme, continued

Band 2  18 – 21  Proficient work

K Evidence of proficiency in selecting relevant knowledge to address the question with precise and integrated direct references to the text and supporting quotation. There may be evidence of awareness of the contexts in which the literary works studied were written and understood.

U Evidence of intelligent understanding of ways in which writers’ choices of structure, form and language shape meanings, with analysis and appreciation of literary methods, effects and contexts.

P Evidence of personal response to the texts, relevant to the question, supported from the text, some originality of thought, straightforward and vigorously articulated, perhaps, rather than penetrating and subtle.

C Expression confident, with some complex ideas expressed with some fluency. Structure is sound. Literary arguments will be coherent, with progression of ideas through clearly linked paragraphs.

O Considers varying views and argues a case with support from the text.

In answers to passage-based questions, work will show engagement with both the given extracts and the wider textual issues. There will be a confident relation of a part of the text to its whole. There will be a proficient appreciation of the effects of the literary features of the text supported by relevant examples from the passage and from the wider text where appropriate. There will be a good knowledge of the appropriate context of the extract or work.

Band 1  22 – 25  Very good work – do not reserve this band for the very best work you see but ensure you put scripts into this band which fulfil the requirements described below. There will always be some candidates who are at a standard over the top of the mark scheme.

K Evidence of a very good ability to select relevant knowledge to address the question with effective use of references and quotation. There may be evidence of sensitive awareness of the contexts in which the literary works studied were written and understood.

U Evidence of very good understanding of ways in which writers’ choices of structure, form and language shape meanings with sustained analysis and sensitive appreciation of literary methods and effects and contexts, possibly including literary genres and conventions.

P Personal response to texts will be perceptive, often freshly personal, fully supported with quotation, and may show originality in approach to and treatment of questions.

C Candidates will express complex literary ideas and arguments with clarity and fluency. Answers will have a coherent structure, with logical progression and effectively linked paragraphs. Expression will be accomplished and appropriate.

O Considers varying views, arguing a persuasive case, relevant to the question, with support from the text.

In answers to passage-based questions, work will sustain an appropriate balance between critical appreciation of given extracts, based on detailed critical analysis, and consideration of the broader textual issues raised by the questions, and relate part of a text to its whole and vice versa in a seamless argument. There will be a very good appreciation of the effects of the literary features of the text, with detailed analysis supported by relevant examples from the passage and the wider text, where appropriate. There will be a very good knowledge of the appropriate context of the extract or work.
Example candidate response – high

1) a) Auden is a poet who has experimented with various forms of poetry. He has used unusual narrative voices in the “Unknown Citizen” to comment on the nature of the government. He has discussed issues of isolation in “Musée Des Beaux Arts” and has commented on the social aspects of humanity in “Fugitive Pieces”. All three of these poems employ various ideas that challenge the reader to think twice before settling on an opinion.

   The main focus of the poem, “The Unknown Citizen”, is the citizen’s dehumanisation of manhood. It is a political commentary on how governments attempt to nourish a totalitarian state where everyone is observed. There is no sense of freedom, and it portrays there is a false sense of freedom provided to the people when in reality conformity is what prevails.

   To make the poem even more effective, Auden used the voice of the state itself to describe its totalitarian nature, and this adds a great level of irony throughout the poem. We see described the life of a man whose name is not known. We have no information on this man, and do not know what he looks like. Hence the title, “Unknown Citizen”. The subtext underneath the title reveals that this man is further reduced to just digits and initials and nothing more. He is stripped of his name that gives him his individuality. For him, the state produces a “marble statue”. In this way, the state shows to the rest of the people that they knew this man, that he cared, but in reality
In this poem it is also shocking to see the level of espionage that the state employs. It is at a level where no ordinary man might expect. It is at a level where even the department collecting the information of the man are kept on eye on. Everything and everyone is watched by the state, suppressing any form of freedom. The state goes on to tell us that the “Berliner Tageblatt” shows that this man paid all his bills, he remained healthy, he was “popular with his mates”, he “liked to drink” and he had added “5 children to the population” which was normal for a man of his age. This man not only had his personal life spiced upon but even terms of being normal were dictated by the state. The state would describe him as “a saint in the modern sense of the word” serving the “Greater Community”. A “saint” in the old sense of the word was one who fought for the people, but now he speaks for the “Greater Community” or in other words, the government.

The state has also employed the department of sociology and psychology to observe this man which is irony in itself. Sociology and Psychology are two fields that are dedicated to studying differences between human races but here they
Example candidate response – high, continued

The state had given him everything a “Modern Man” would need: a car, a television and a refrigerator, but yet it is questioned in the poem, “Was he free? Was he happy?” Surely the state would have known if something was wrong as they spied on his every move, but in reality we know the man was not free or happy. The state does write the terms of normally and this man has followed every term so in the eyes of the state he was normal but in actuality he desired freedom. This is a poem riddled with irony and wit due to the fact that the speaking voice is of the state and the state is speaking against itself. Andersen uses the irony to challenge the readers perception of the government to tell them the government is not what they seem to be. They may keep you happy in terms of materialistic value but you are nothing but a number to them.

The idea of isolation presented in “The Unknown Citizen” is the front running theme of his poem, “Missie De Beare Arts”. In this poem Andersen shocks the readers with the idea that there is no empathy left in the world. No one will care for the pains you are going through if it does not disturb their daily routine. Andersen has used images from religion, from nature and from the ancient Greeks which is typical of him.

(P.T.O)
He first describes the "miraculous birth". This is the birth of Christ. A birth of a man who is the prophet of God, born without a father and the Advocate main advocate for one of the biggest religions in the world. But despite great accolades, there were other children present who did not care for this birth. They did not know of the birth as they were too busy playing their games and enjoying themselves. This came to the indifference of man.

Auden then describes the indifference of nature. He portrays images of a dog rubbing himself against a tree and a "forbidding horse" deny as he pleases. The idea behind these images is that nature will go on with its duties. It will pay no attention to what is going on in the life of a man. Then a child is born without a father, here a dog rubs himself. No attention or solace can be found in nature. That is...

Auden ends the poem with the image of the "painting of Icarus". This was a great painting about a boy who flew too close to the sun. His wings melted and he plunged into the water. A nearby ploughman paid no attention to this spectacle as it did not disturb his field and neither did a nearby ship that just went on sailing away. Even in ancient history we see how alienated man can be.

All these images serve to prove the isolation...
Example candidate response – high, continued

Q. "If man and the various references in the poem are meant to shock the reader and tell them that from ancient history, till the present and into the foreseeable future, man will be alone and must fend for himself.

In the poem "Refugee Blues" the idea of isolation is lifted from a personal level to a social level. It is essentially a social commentary on human with the secondary theme being man's inhumanity to man. What is so shocking about this statement is that man is also an animal, part of nature. But unlike the elephants or the bison man will not help his own kind.

"Blues" is a form of jazz music that focuses on pain and melancholy. couple the word with "Refugee's", who are people that are driven from their home, we are shown the suffering of people who have no home. One would expect man to come to the aid of man but rather they turn a blind eye.

These refugees have "old passports". A passport is your identity but now these identities are old. They are of no use as they are now refugees. These passports will not help them with the new border rules and they will not allowed to enter any new country for fear of the country's "bread being stolen" by unwanted members. If indeed the state does decide to help these refugees are always told..."
Exam candidate response – high, continued

In Auden’s own words, “The purpose of poetry is to disenchant and disorientate.” In other words, its purpose is to present reality as it really is, despite it coming as a shock or a challenge to preconceived notions. It is this idea that links all three poems together, and through Auden’s use of unusual narrative, wit, irony and sarcasm, the reader is shocked to realize the dehumanization of man and how indifferent and isolated man can be.
Examiner comment – high

The main strength in this essay is the way the candidate focuses on the question and links the poems together to generate a coherent discussion about what is shocking about the state and individual people’s capacity for dehumanising others.

Throughout the essay there is reference to the question and a consistently proficient level of textual knowledge used to support the thesis as the discussion moves through a detailed analysis of Auden’s presentation of the state in ‘Unknown Citizen’, personal isolation in ‘Musée des Beaux Arts’ and social exclusion in ‘Refugee Blues’. There is intelligent understanding of various aspects of Auden’s methods for which the essay was awarded 20 marks in Band 2. The use of various voices is analysed in detail in ‘Unknown Citizen’ with intelligent insight into the effects of specific details of language such as the reduction of individuality to ‘digits and initials’ and the implications of words such as ‘normal’ and ‘marble’ to show an appreciation that the poem is ‘riddled with irony and wit due to the fact that the speaking voice is of the state and the state is speaking against itself’. The use and significance of allusions to the ‘miraculous birth’, Nature and mythology is discussed to bring out ‘indifference’ in ‘Musée des Beaux Arts’ and the idea of voices is returned to more implicitly in ‘Refugee Blues’ with some appreciation of tone and personal interpretation.

One of the issues for candidates responding to the essay question on poetry is to discuss the texts as poems and this essay would have received higher marks if there had been more evidence of this, particularly in the treatment of ‘Musée des Beaux Arts’ and ‘Refugee Blues’.

Total mark awarded = 20 out of 25
**Example candidate response – middle**

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| a. | Auden often disenchants his readers. In "September I" he shatters what he calls 'enlightened dream' regarding the individual role as part of the state, and during war time. Here he also hints at our powerlessness to change these situations. This is confirmed in "In Memory of WB Yeats" as he asserts feeling of lack of power to create change. In "Holloway" Auden attacks one of our concern and idealistic notions of romantic love. "September I", written about Hitler's invasion of Poland attacks the ordinary American's concepts that they can or should escape from reality. Auden use simple but evocative language to denounce neutrality and much the esteemed, getenable achievements of mankind. Into this neutral air, blind skyscrapers raise themselves to their full height to proclaim the strength of collective man. These lines smack with cynicism, evoking the arrogance and immorality of the society. In an existential sense, Auden questions the esteemed achievements of...
Mankind, such as These architectural marvels. This is underscored in the line “each language pours its competitive ways, use”. Notices of collective man are set and the Vote, as well as 'helpless governors' are ridiculed as they have failed to prevent war. This failure is underscored by the following lines:

“Accurate scholarship / Can unequal / the whole offense / From justice
Until now // That drove a culture / To madness // From what happened / At Dussel / What huge image made
A psychopathic god // I and the public know // What all school children are taught // Those in whom evil is done // No evil in return.”

Andere traces the historical process which lead to the use of Hitler (the psychopathic god) but simultaneously asserts that this knowledge, possessed even by schoolchildren, has had no impact on events. He shows that the poem is set in Sarajevo shield ordinary people from reality: “Let’s we see where we really are // Alone in a haunted wood // Children afraid of the night // Who have never been happy or good.” This haunting

maggot is an allusion to Dante’s
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| Not exactly but | Dying comedy. Similarly, Auden's poem, "The Buried Giant," explores the idea that "the evil bred in the bone" of every man and woman that could not be undone. It cannot be "universally loved," but it must endure. Even if the "pain is all again."

Auden considers the emptiness of modern life in "In Memory of WB Yeats" as well. "In the waste and "in the impotence and "in the impotence and "in the imperial and "in the imperial and "in the imperial and "in the imperial and "in the imperial and "in the imperial and "in the imperial and \\

The use of alliteration emphasizes the cold cruelty of capitalism, juxtaposed with the cynically alluded to sufferings of the poor. The implication is that the individual who is alone and unaware
of his own lack of freedom. Auden asserts, "Poetry makes nothing happen, it merely surmises." Auden applies the same sense of corruption and immensity expressed in "September" by telling his readers that "Time that is intolerant of the brave and innocent, worships language" and pardons the "cruel and conceit of workers like Keeling and Auddelet (who defended unpardoned and ungenius, respectively). The desolation experienced by man and the indifference of the world he lives in is emphasised in the line "the wolves ran in the evergreen forests," when Yeats died.

In the paradoxically tender love poem, "Lullaby," Auden challenges readers' idealised notions of love, while once again emphasising the "cruel and conceit and indifference of time," as well as the corruption in society.

"Lay your sleeping head, my love, / On my heartless arm, / Time and forgetteth burn away / The individual beauty of thoughtful children, and the grew / Prove the child ephemeral." Auden confesses the heartlessness
As imperfection and failings are at the heart of the novel. He shows that love is
tainted by the mortality and vulnerability of human beings. Images of
a dying child evoke the inevitability of change.

Miten appears to ridicule lovers who mistake 'their ordinary
sins' for Venus' vision of 'universal love and hope'. Even
the 'sentimental' idea of the
religious aesthetic is not spared.
Miten acknowledges his inability
to sustain love by telling his
lover 'None of distress see you feel // By the involuntary powers //
Nights of insult let you pass // Watched by every human love.'
That is, Miten relinquishes these
responsibilities to others, such
as the 'involuntary powers' as we understand that 'he cannot'
fulfill them.

Images of corruption, the
'pedantic' cries of 'fashionable
madmen' (politicians) are shown
to coexist with love, just.
Miten epitomizes the suffering, cruelly
and dehumanization, the 'triple of
insult'. Love will not exist.

He cannot, however, be ignored
that Miten makes concessions.
hope in each of these poems, in “September I”, while humbly acknowledging his own limited abilities, he pleads to show an “affirming flame” in response to “isomeric points of light” which flash where the “dust exchange their messages.” He says that in his poetry he has a “voice to undo the folded lie.” Having used the phrase “I and the public” and “we” Auden includes all of society under one banner, implying that we can all use our voices to “undo the folded lie.”

Even after conceding that poetry “makes nothing happen” and referring to the “dogs of Europe” and “intellectual disgrace,” Auden tells the poet to “perpetuate his craft” and achieve what he can. If the poet cannot change history we can “teach the free man how to praise” even in the “poison of his days.” Thus drawing a connection between the poet and poet and the man convinced.
Similarly in "Hullabaloo", Auden's desire to see his love well-fed does show sincere, if ephemeral, love. He pledges not to let a single smell, nor thought nor lust be lost. He urges his love to recite herself as mortally, and the mortal word enough, implying happiness is achievable.

Auden does disenchanted the reader just never tells him or her what to believe. He offers a realistic picture of life, encompassing beauty and ugliness. The reader is left to decide what they believe having taken stock of reality. Auden does not encourage the reader to sleep on.
Examiner comment – middle

The focus of this question was on Auden’s poetic methods and effects. This essay shows a detailed knowledge of quite difficult poems with an impressive command of quotation, and a generally sound understanding of aspects of Auden’s views, informed by some knowledge of historical and personal contexts. Rather than directly addressing the terms of the question, there is a partial reference to Auden’s view that the purpose of poetry is to ‘disenchant and disintoxicate’ and this sense of the poet’s purpose implicitly underpins the discussion of the three poems, to emerge more clearly in the discussion on hope at the end. This gives the essay some coherence but to gain higher marks the material should have been more explicitly shaped to the question and for this reason, the essay was awarded 17 at the top of middle level. It would have been more highly rewarded if the approach had been more analytical.

Within the accounts of the ideas in the poems there is some consideration of poetic methods and effects. There are some specific references to images of children and corruption and some sound analysis of aspects of poetic method in comments such as ‘bestial images and alliteration dramatise the cold cruelty of capitalism which is juxtaposed with the cynically alluded to sufferings of the poor’. Generally speaking however, the often pertinent but overlong quotations are paraphrased or partially discussed. For example, the candidate clearly understands the poet’s purpose in the discussion of ‘September 1st 1939’ but insights such as ‘Auden questions the ostensible achievements of mankind such as these architectural marvels’ in reference to the ‘skyscrapers’ are straightforward; the comments showing a sound understanding of the meaning rather than a literary appreciation of the poetry. The use of the words ‘mock’ and ‘cynicism’ suggest a personal response to the effects of the language, but an analysis of the choice of language within that quotation and the effects of the personification would have shown an understanding of how the poet generated these effects and allowed the candidate to display higher order analytical skills.

Candidates need to be encouraged to choose and discuss material strategically. More successful attempts at this question chose poems such as ‘Refugee Blues’, ‘The Unknown Citizen’ and a love poem where there were obvious contrasts within a range of poetic methods, forms and devices to explore ideas relevant to the question.

Total mark awarded = 17 out of 25
Auden evolved his poetic style over his lifetime presenting different methods and uses of language to portray his recurring themes. The theme of the subconscious mind and his own inner thoughts is often explored by him through his early career until the end of his life. However, the variety through which he explores the unconscious in poetry is shocking to the reader as it changes impacts and changes the readers view of Auden every time.

The poems "The Door" which is based on the subject of the subconscious as well as "From the very first coming down" and "As I walked out one evening" deal with the poet's mind and his inner most thoughts. It also serves as a testament of his transition of ideas and emotions throughout his life. "From the very first coming down" is in Auden's early earlier poems its elliptical language which deals with a stream of consciousness like flow of thoughts that are inserted through passing images and there is a perfect example of his fairly undeveloped yet interesting method of displaying his ideas. "into the valley with a plough... crouching the behind a sheep's pen... spring's preliminary driver" These phrases although unconnected are show Auden's flow of thoughts and emotions as he
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<tr>
<td>Paraphrase</td>
<td>&quot;As I walked out one evening it was a more mature and developed Ander...&quot;</td>
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| Evidence | "Events" are played as "actions" arising from experiences and images. It is essentially an expose of his subconscious through his various observations. "Bikes at huddled like corpses" is one such image that shows his state of mind through images. In the flume of spring he is surrounded by ideas of death. Imagery such as "embryo chuckles" and "His use of phrases such as "darky choice seem a necessary error" is also further indication of his depressed state of mind. However in this poem Ander skillfully deals with expressing his thoughts by using relaxed and paradoxes to reveal his state of mental landscape. Complement to the imagery of his observations is the fact that poem "The Poor" is the most structured and concise on the
Example candidate response – low, continued

Subject: He uses phrases such as
"... we pile upon it ... when we are sad ..."
"... it made enormas Alice see a wonder ..."
"... and made her cry just for being tiny." These thoughts are used by Auden to describe the nature of the subconscious human mind, in which he describes in which he uses the metaphor of a door to describe. His thoughts are carefully structured into a poem, with "heavenly lights" being used to describe the subconscious as being a realm of imagination as well as a storage space for our fears and sorrows.

His flow of thought is consistent to the same metaphor of the door. This poem was an example of Auden's most developed stage in his poetry.

Therefore, Auden's transition is evident through these three poems which are all based on the subconscious mind. They are all examples of themes and concerns which are about the human condition as well as his socialist ideas, as well as his personal thoughts about love, loss and the nature of life. Auden's transition moves towards a single subject as his poetry matures, relying on a single image or metaphor to show his theme as he does in the door where he uses multiple images and emotions.
Example candidate response – low, continued

Examiner comment – low

This essay is poor because although there is evidence of some textual knowledge the response to the question is limited. There is some attempt to make an argument in the introduction: Auden’s exploration of the ‘sub-conscious mind and his inner thoughts is shocking to the reader as it changes the reader’s view of Auden’, but this focus on what the poems reveal about Auden or his concerns is not pursued. The essay was awarded 8 marks because some basic understanding of the effects of language emerges through the limited accounts of the three chosen poems. For example, the observation that ‘the stream of conscious like flow of thoughts [that] are aroused through passing images’ is supported by some quotations from ‘From the very first coming down’, but like the images quoted from ‘As I walked out…’, the point is restricted to the assertion that these images ‘expose his subconscious’, his ‘state of mind’. There is some limited consideration of how the poet shapes meaning: ‘in the time of spring he is surrounded by death’—and some understanding of the extended use of the metaphor of ‘the door’. Discussion of all the poems is partial and there is some lack of clarity and cohesion in the treatment of ‘The Door.’

To gain higher marks the material needed to be shaped more carefully to the task. It is a pity that the way ‘As I walked out…’ challenges romantic notions about love is overlooked. Candidates understandably try to make use of material they know well, but an attempt to makeover pre-prepared ideas can often be a distraction, as it is here.

Total mark awarded = 8 out of 25
Question 1b


Example candidate response – high

Anden’s poems usually present the social and, at times, political concerns of the time. His style is characterized by a variety of forms, voices and topics. As he himself stated, “the purpose of poetry is to disenchant and disintoxicate.” In this poem, the main idea presented is that of old age, as Anden uncovers the sad reality of the ‘Old People’s Home’.

Through out the poem, Anden describes the limitations of old age.

“Each has her own nuance of damage.”

“Nuance of damage” indicates that they were once perfect, and have now disintegrated to different degrees. Anden also provides a range of their activities; they “may breed a bee”, listen to and dance to “easy radios”, “endure T.V.” F or “community singing”.

Quite paradoxically, these activities actually point to “reduced their state of inaction and their inability to be active and energetic. Most of their occupations do not involve much movement. The ones that do, such as the dancing, are clearly “slow” and perhaps even painful. The word “endure” indicates that they are almost forced to participate, and that they derive no particular enjoyment from their existence.

A typical feature of many of Anden’s
Example candidate response – high, continued

poems is the use of a light-hearted façade, even irony and sarcasm to create humour. The speaker presents the most grave and philosophical matters. In this poem he divides the group of old people into classes, ironically using social class labels to group them. For example, the “elite” are the ones in the best condition, the “average majority” are the ones in the middle state, and the “lovers”, are in the worst and “last the terminally incompetent” who are in the worst state. The use of these class labels adds an edge of dark humour to the poem.

The irony only exacerbates the sadness of the old people’s condition. However, the “elite” are “intelligent of what has happened and why, they are dangerous to a glum beyond tears”. It is heavily implied that their awareness of their own deterioration is a cause for depression. This elicits a great amount of sympathy from the reader as well. Another example of the way the humour only highlights the hopelessness of their state is found in the lines: “Plants may sweat profusely but neverully themselves.” While the idea of plants sweating “profusely” is adjacently amusing,
Auden has shown here that the state of these people is even worse than that of plants. Plants have no intellect, no awareness, and this comparison increases our sympathy towards the old people, and also creates a sense of horror and despair.

This increasing effect of horror is consolidated further by the reference that the “loners” are “muttering in limbo.” “Muttering” may imply a degree of insanity. “Limbo” referred to an estate of in-between state, and it is clear that these people are only waiting for death and have no purpose left in life. Their living is almost futile. The concluding lines of this poem make this idea clear, as the persona contemplates whether the old person he is waiting will simply be better off in death.

Towards the middle of the poem, Auden mentions the loss of a collectivistic society with large family units. The generation he is referring to in the poem “all appeared when the world... was more spacious, more clean to look at.” “Spacious” and “clean” seem to indicate that the old people taken away from their family and put into old homes are trapped in a way. An image of a confined and
brand living space is created. He also makes an almost affectionate reference to "a child, in dismay with Gran to be reviled and told a story". A family dynamic is created, accompanied by a feeling of comfort and security. By contrasting these positive aspects of the past, Auden points to the loss of such values in the present.

The inclusion of "though much was away there" acknowledges that the world of the past was not perfect, and yet, despite this, the world was perhaps a better place because of the loving family dynamic. This sense of loss is followed up in the next lines with a simile of the old people being "stowed out of conscience as unpopular luggage". An impersonal feeling is created with this comparison. The word "the statement that this "generation is too faint to fade like this" adds to this feeling - "fade" almost seems to imply that they are eventually forgotten, and "pass away as almost strangers."

In the last stanza, Auden clinches the sadness of old age by providing a contrast to the youth of the person he is visiting. "She was in
Example candidate response – high, continued

The pomp and circumstance of her hey-day "pomp" indicates an almost laughable
The contrast between their relationship
ship to then and their relationship
now is also clear: in the past,
visiting her was a "presumptive joy",
now it is "a good work". This also
reinforces the impersonal effect that
was created in the first stanza. This

juxtapositioning of the days of her
prime with her disintegrated
self now is effective in eliciting pity
and in showing the extent of the
change that accompanies ageing.

In the last three lines of the
poem, Auden voices a thought that
is confused and almost paradoxical:
"Am I cold to wish for a
speedy, painless demitton, pray, as I
knew the prayers that God or Nature
will avert her earthly function?"
This paradoxical wish encompasses

the complexity of the human
condition. The person only desires
for the old person's own state to
improve, and yet ironically that
improvement can only be gained
in death, a condition that human
instinctively deny and try to avoid &
confronting. The confusion that is
obvious in the tone of the persona
here reflects the reader's own
confusion. This is a rhetorical question.
Example candidate response – high, continued

Provides much food for thought for the reader.

In many ways, this poem is typical of Auden’s style. Although he focused on personal themes and concerns in his early poetry, by the middle of his career, he had moved onto more political and social concerns which can be appreciated more universally. This poem is an example of a social concern that Auden wished to explore. Additionally, Auden often mourned the loss of values and the past, as he mourned the loss of collective feelings in this poem.

What is most characteristically ‘Audenesque’ in this poem is the use of dark humour and irony to engage the reader and to better express the main concern of the poem. The light-hearted tone maintained through much of the description only intensifies the sorry state of the ‘Old People’s Home’. One last thing that is typical of Auden’s style is the thought-provoking effect his poems often have. He does not simply describe the effects of old age, but at the end he leaves the reader in a thoughtful mood.
Examiner comment – high

In an effort to structure a response to (b) questions, candidates often resort to a running commentary approach and although there are elements of this here, this candidate moves confidently around the poem with perceptive understanding of the ideas, well-integrated quotations, and an ability to develop ideas and link them into an effectively structured essay. Though knowledge of Auden’s concerns and characteristic methods is presented in a general way, because of the intelligent personal response to the language and some sustained analysis of how Auden generates meaning and tone, this essay has been awarded 22 marks.

The candidate consistently considers the implications of language, sometimes to explain the meaning but often to support insightful interpretations such as the observation that the activities described ‘actually point to [the old people’s] inability to be active or energetic’. There is sustained discussion of the ironic effects of the use of social class labels: how together with the reference to plants the humour only highlights the hopelessness of their state. There is a literary appreciation of the structure of the poem, with some sustained analysis of the use of contrasts within it, leading to a perceptive discussion on some of the ways Auden generates a sense of loss and sadness.

To be awarded more marks there needed to be some specific references to the wider text or some attention paid to Auden’s idiosyncratic usage of language such as ‘glum’ as a noun or ‘abrupt’ as a verb, the effects of which are overlooked in the otherwise pertinent selection of quotations.

Total mark awarded = 22 out of 25
Auden, the speaker

The speaker in the following poem had recently visited an old folks' home which gave rise to the subject of senescence and mental as well as the physical decay which is inevitable, moreover establishing a sense of social hierarchy or a kind of sub-culture within that stage of age, sardonically and humorously mocking the way Auden views the social structures built within it. His tone is contradictory but perceptive and aware of current situations regarding ageing and death.

Auden comically however potentially seriously refers to those individuals who can still have the mental stability to "dress and decent themselves" the "elite", or the upper-hand within amongst the individuals in the 'old people's home'. As he suggest that they are "ambulant" and with a "single stick" it gives a rather concerning descriptive imagery that the old individuals are yet still physically incapable of moving freely or acquiring physical freedom. Speaks, one of the critics says "sympathetic satire" is therefore characteristic prevalent in his work, which may be true to an extent as no this extent, as they are.
his method of labelling them as “elite” could not, moreover, add a sense of pity and sorrow. It may also suggest the futility of options at that current stage of life due to the physical and mental decay and the intruding and disrupting hidden passions that might still persist within those individuals. The reader may feel a sense of unease as the individuals subjected in his poem may have greater achievements unfulfilled, adding that with the satirical mocking, it becomes extra surreal and bizarre to them.

Auden’s style of inevitability is characteristic in his previous poems and has somehow shown through in Old People’s Home due to his previous poem poems, regarding the personification of “time” and “clocks” being juxtaposed with the “love” he felt he felt felt to be infinite. Knowing this entire felt “time” and reality was a significant characteristic in his poems, serves this idea of sentence in Old People’s Home to be the sad reality of truth. The sad reality is presented therefore in his wording of their urge for “freedom”, “their very carnal freedom is their spirit’s bane”; their “freedom”
Auden’s characteristic of objective realism is moreover enhanced through his critically descriptive images, along with a sense of harshness or jarring in the unrhymed scheme and irregular patterning of the poem, “majority, who endure TV and clean by lenient therapists do community singing.” There seems to be a dull tone in this stanza, as well as a sense of mundane and lethargic atmosphere persisting. Auden moreover seems to be attempting to create a sense of understanding in the way he wants the reader to perceive, see and feel what he perceives. This rather descriptive poem juxtaposes with River Profile, Profile and the ambiguities and metaphorical meaning behind it as ‘Old People’s Home’, is direct and upfront about his concerns with life and aging, whilst the other seems to “glorify aging” which was something Mendelsohn claimed Auden to have done in that poem. However it is possible that Auden may have finally understood
Once again the opposite side of the 
beauty of age, to a rather objective
and anti-romantic reality of senescence.
There is a strong sense of domesticity in
or confinement, “endure T.V.,
lenient therapists” which shows the
harsh reality of physical and mental
incapability. The effect of “lenient”
goes to show the relaxed vibe Auden
gets in that setting, which may be both
depressing and soothing to him.

Auden also writes the poem in a story-
telling manner and finalises the poem
with a rhetorical question, which is also
characteristic of his previous poems.
Poems as to somehow reflect over
his views or possibly aid and induce
the reader’s reflection regarding his
own anti-romantic concerns of
aging, “Am I cold to wish for a speedy
painless dormition...?” His contradicting
view is apparent in the final question of
one of his final poems, as he
expresses himself and rhetorically asks
the readers to [emp]athise with his
views on whether he is at wrong to
think in such a perhaps selfish and
cynical way, after giving full
descriptions of the old individuals’
predicaments and suppressed freedom in
the ‘Old people’s home’. Auden seems to

This is a competent response to the question in that the candidate selects some relevant ideas from critical reading and some knowledge of the wider text to inform a sound understanding of some aspects of the given poem, and for this reason it was awarded 16 marks.

Using the ideas of a ‘sympathetic satire’ and ‘objective reality’, the candidate offers straightforward insights into the way Auden creates meaning, for example, through the briefly supported discussion on ‘descriptive imagery’ which suggests the ‘futility of options’, and the ‘semantic field of domesticity or confinement’. There is some sound understanding of the poet’s ‘anti-romantic’ purpose with a relevant link to ‘As I walked out…’ and the treatment of Time and love to the ‘sad reality’ of ‘their carnal freedom is their spirit’s bane’, but discussion of this quotation and observations on the use of specific words such as ‘elite’ is restricted and occasionally lacks precision. The essay is characterised by occasional insights such as the contrast between Auden’s ‘direct and upfront’ treatment of his concerns about ageing in the given poem and the metaphorical treatment of it in ‘River Profile’, or valid assertions that the ‘objective realism’ is enhanced by the harsh effects of ‘the unrhymed scheme and irregular patternin’. The candidate clearly appreciates the tone, but does not really explore how Auden achieves ‘the interplay between sardonic humour and pity’.

To gain higher marks, there needed to be a fuller discussion of ideas within the poem and more precise analysis of the effects generated by Auden’s choice and use of language.

Total mark awarded = 16 out of 25
Example candidate response – low

1

In the eyes of the sky, in the eyes of man at early age. Most of his poetry have common simple
contemporary awareness and according with
then we have to choose them.
The work was often a lament for the order
service, in some cases, a lament for
We had the same poems (In Memory of Years).
Another common theme were mercy and
are required. If we have mercy.
Humiliation (In reference to
the platitude). A visit to as a common
church in many of his poems such as his
poetry. The foremost reason is another. It is
need for us to use less complex than other

0

General overview

Introduction

The form of the poem is
not consistent. Other
rhythm and rhyme in order of
finding poetry with the energy of
sentiment anchor, very like quantity in poems
such as "The Voyage of the Blyss.
It follows no strict
rhyme scheme, in the first
verse it is or line (consider it to be a range)
such rhyme scheme roughly follows
"ABCBDEEF"

with the latter voyage. The most the \cological
Rather open.

eg. P

Some general development

Judging within poem.

This particular poem appears to be for advancement from a comment on the present prevalent era and society toward the result and effect it has on certain individuals.

Moving onto the substance of the poem, May Anderson and Helen Adron seem to have a daydreaming toward the human condition. This can be seen when after he has tasted his own society in the first three stanzas, the last stanza. However, he speaks of his own present through what he predicts for the body of the railway may fail. He actually perhaps reflects ideas of identity crisis, ‘hardship who

One was in the pangs and sunshine of her

key day’. This particular line could also symbolise the drastic change society undergoes.

While those who everyone has been relocated, or a position end does not necessarily mean anything anymore, the same vein can perhaps be seen in the comparison.

Of them in different all sorts of society

The elite... audience and semblant reality
Example candidate response – low, continued

Broadly
valued
but
Faced
with
old
people.

Pro
long
imploded

Skeptical

Anyhow

Interestingly

Phillip

In 1990,

Nearing

Using a
certainty
within
certainty.
Example candidate response – low, continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not explicitly mentioned</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Same as above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offered interpretation of 'Nazi'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endear</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mistaking here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Since</td>
</tr>
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</table>

...on the planet that could be a response to the endurance of nature, it is direct in accordance with the movement of humanity: a may sweetly progress but never really themselves, all of which of course add to the theme of dehumanisation.

In addition to this above stated, one be under considering, perhaps this is a program to the human nature at this, who were divided under a single order a perhaps their unity and loyalty to their leader Hitler.

Regardless, the community remains intact and cruel nature of their at present and goals, they were not the less loyal to each other, and their leaders, and their cause. This is in contrast to the general public who seem to not be loyal to anything or anyone that they may. The canidge, he can when there was a premonition that they not a good work, everyone seem to have lost their meaning and their appeal. This adds a certain individual element to the poem.

Also, him 18-20, commenting on how when the world was more spacious, more comedy to behold, swiftly the gradually disappearing a aura. Most prevail in contrast to find there sure to recognise, over how the world be to know must to be. He claims perhaps sure to blame this on the entire state of all of humanity as state it is the result of dehumanisation. Then came more or going and there sure to be a vivid manner of...
Example candidate response – low, continued

Page 6 – 20th Century Writing

Applying in which human beings example
to refer to human beings, further complicating
the dilemma of how states do not feel
they do not have a conscience.

Mrs. Drew in a Newman’s sense, which children
could possibly refer to
the manner in which human beings
be working off and observing, the very
enjoyable and enjoyable around them
but do nothing about it. Then a child in absence
will name and enjoy, with joy
be revalued and told a story, children
untold to be the most honest and emotional
as they are innocuous, the same time
and the seems to be absolutely placed with
her grandmother. It is then she’s revalued
and tied to story perhaps a brief reference
to complicity and a meek kind of system that
seems to operate completely divided by ends.

The word “revalued” in particular could
perhaps refer to the manner in which
provision values have completely changed in
the fascist regime due to the indiff

To turn the conclusion
of the poem, they will be seen, ‘know
she pays the God or Nature will attempt
through how to be certain, fun at the idea
seems to be God or called unto the others all
those in love, and nature and God are seen
to be just. Then there seems to be an
unusual or order of things in the open time
Example candidate response – low, continued

[Handwritten text]
Examiner comment – low

This essay is typical in many ways of candidates choosing to do the (b) question on the basis of some study of the writer and knowledge of the wider text but perhaps not having a detailed understanding of the given poem and lacking the confidence to attempt a close reading of it. The approach to the question is partial: an attempt to discuss the extent to which the poem is characteristic of Auden’s concerns.

The essay shows a limited ability to use knowledge to address the given poem and there is a tendency to drift into material of tangential significance. The candidate offers an overview of Auden’s work as context, within which the idea of ‘humanisation’ had most potential for the given poem, but the undiscriminating reference to lines 2–20 shows a limited ability to explore the idea. The limited understanding of Auden’s use of such words ‘elite’ and ‘the majority’ to present a hierarchy of disability is betrayed by the reference to ‘their social status’. The poem is challenging in some of its expression, but it is clear enough in terms of its subject matter and the poetic point of view. There is some limited understanding of the structure in the observation that the poet moves from the general to consider his own feelings at the end; there is some personal response to language in the brief comments on ‘conscience’ for example, and the essay works through to a basic understanding of the view that death might be preferred. Unfortunately in the candidate’s concern to display some knowledge of the wider concerns, the significance of the title and the detailed descriptions of the people within the old people’s home are not considered. There are some valid points in the attempt to develop a coherent argument about changes in society but the candidate does not look closely enough at the language within the context of the poem, so ‘One that unites them all’ is seen as a reference to Hitler and the Nazis and the mention of ‘plants’ is seen as a reference to the ‘indifference of Nature’. The general background knowledge about Auden’s concerns and the Platonic Ladder in particular proves something of a distraction.

The essay is awarded only 7 marks because of its sketchy treatment of the given poem and the limited understanding of the way the language shapes meaning. There is a basic understanding of Auden’s concern that people do not care for the suffering of others and some suggestion perhaps of knowledge of ‘Musée des Beaux Arts’ and the ‘Unknown Citizen’. More specific references to those poems and a clearer understanding of poetic method and effects were needed for the essay to be awarded more marks.

Total mark awarded = 7 out of 25
Question 6a

In Pinter's play, 'The Birthday Party', Goldberg and McCann are 'the two strangers who invade the safe haven'. Stanley has established himself. They are presented as a 'brains-and-brawn' or 'leader-and-stooge' duo. Many a times the two seem to be part of the same entity, and yet Pinter presents them as two, and not one character. Their presence in the play is significant in the play, not just because they represent the outside threat, but also because they are vital in creating the 'comedy of menace' that this play is renowned for.

When Goldberg and McCann first enter, Goldberg seems firmly in control while McCann seems to be the follower. When they enter, the following dialogue ensues:

McCann: "Is this it?"
Goldberg: "This is it."
McCann: "Are you sure?"
Goldberg: "Sure I'm sure."

Further into the conversation, Goldberg has to convince McCann to take a seat, by stating "We'll both take a seat", a tactic almost more appropriate for dealing with a child. At this point, Goldberg seems to be the more dominant one, the 'leader', while McCann shows a nervous
and almost childlike dependence on Goldberg. This is further reinforced when McCann asks for information about this "case", and Goldberg is the one with all the answers.

This presentation of their relationship is continued until almost the very end of the play. Goldberg is talkative and tells many stories of his past, with references to his mother, father, and wife. He is insidious and charming, speaking in clichés that make him seem almost like an automation at times. On the other hand, McCann is quiet and not very responsive. This is seen in the attempted conversation Stanley has with McCann upon their first meeting. At the beginning of Act 2, we can also not help but question McCann's intelligence at times.

The Act begins with the visual of McCann sitting and tearing newspaper into 'five equal strips'. When Stanley touches these strips, he says "Mind that", and shows one almost obsessive possessiveness of the strips of newspaper.

The presentation of Goldberg as "the brains" and McCann as the "brain" is most clear when the two try to force Stanley to sit. Goldberg tells McCann to "make him sit", and
Example candidate response – high, continued

| Detailed | McCann then proceeds to act as a sort of go-between between Goldberg and Stanley. When Stanley refuses to sit, McCann turns to Goldberg and informs him, “He won’t sit.” Here we also see that when McCann attempts to verbally out-maneuver Stanley, he fails. Stanley says, “You first.” McCann hesitates and sits, but Stanley does not. Instead he says, “McCann is indignant and exclaims, “That’s a dirty trick.” Yet Goldberg only has to ‘quietly’ say “sit down,” for Stanley to take a seat.

| Effect? | Yet–Goldberg and McCann are both equally dangerous. The other characters and even the audience does not fully understand them. Goldberg conceals his true self behind a facade of language and almost unutterable memories that hold no real emotion. Despite his excessive narrations, we cannot understand his character. Like any other language to conceal identity is an important theme of the play. McCann hides using his silences. He reveals only the bare minimum of himself as he never engages in excessive conversation. In the first presentation of these two characters, Pinter also gives Goldberg the line which describes
Example candidate response – high, continued

McCann to be "cool as a whistle" while doing the job. The audience knows from the very beginning not to underestimate McCann because of his initial nervousness or 'follower' status.

At times, the audience cannot help but wonder whether McCann and Goldberg even truly know each other. McCann calls Goldberg "Nat", but in his stories, Goldberg reveals that his family referred to him as "Siney". In Act 3, when Peter tells Goldberg, "Dermot told me", Goldberg is blank and cannot place "Dermot" and yet we are told that "Dermot" is McCann's first name. As has been revealed early on in the play, names are powerful. When Stanley hears the name "Goldberg" from Meg towards the end of Act 1, he is completely shocked and frozen and can only give monosyllabic responses after he emerges from his "silence". At the end of the play, in Act 3, when Goldberg sinks into his trance, McCann repeatedly yells "Nat" to receive no response. Only when he uses the name "Siney" does he get a reaction and a very violent one from Goldberg. This ambiguity as to whether McCann and Goldberg truly know each other makes them even more...
Example candidate response – high, continued

In terms of dramatic significance, Goldberg and McLaun play an important role. The two halves seem like two halves of the same entity, with the way they often complete each other’s lines and the similar language they use. For example, when...
Example candidate response – high, continued

McCann asks “Is this it?” Goldberg was the same words to reply “This is it.” Yet Pinter divides them into two separate characters. This allows the reader to bring comedy to life by the interaction of the two characters. Furthermore, the menace is also heightened by their existence as a duo rather than an individual.

Goldberg and McCann’s interactions often add humour to the most intense scenes of the play. During the interrogation scene, they ask Stanley both ridiculous and serious questions. For example, “When did you last shower?” as compared to “Do you believe in an external force?”

Even in Act 3, where they attempt to re-configure Stanley, they make both silly references and darker and “more dangerous comments”. “Well fix you.” Slapstick humour and occasional vaudeville interrogation style add to the dark amusement. However, the comedy that is created through their presence only
Example candidate response – high, continued

Serves to heighten the menace. The scenes which are the most comic are also the ones that are the most menacing. Pinter firstly presents these characters after a considerable wait.

Before their entrance, not much action has occurred in the play. This waiting and delay is one of the ways Pinter builds up the tension before they even enter. When they do enter, they engage in an amusing parody, which serves to show how deceptive the threat can be.

Most of the humans that is created in the menacing scenes of the interrogation and re-programming of Stanley is through linguistic techniques.

The absurdity and cleaning devices from the linguistic absurdity of their talk dialogue adds to the menace as they torture Stanley through the ridiculous. Their dialogues are also full of contradictions. They accuse Stanley of killing his wife – "Did you kill your wife?" and also question him as to why he never married and why "he left her in a lurch".

On the wedding day Goldberg and McIlvan clearly derive pleasure from the confusion this leaves Stanley in.

As he stutters "En-Ah", McIlvan almost
Example candidate response – high, continued

Jeffrey exclaims, "he doesn't know". Tone.

When Stanley can only grunt in response to their "prospect", they only push him further and seem to truly enjoy his helpless and speechless state. The amusement that we gain from the torture increases the effect of menace. It also allows Pinter to make an intense comment about the nature of torture and its unacceptability. This adds to the political theme of the play and the comment on America's unfair foreign policy in Pinter's eyes.

Thus, the Goldberg-McCann duo plays an important part in the development of the play's effects and themes. By presenting them as a duo, Pinter immediately opens up opportunities for comedy and also increases the menace. The two become part of an organisation and their similarity indicates complicity. A single character instead of the two would have been an individual, and this would have put Stanley on an equal footing with the outside threat. This against one puts the odds against Stanley and makes his disintegration inevitable from the very beginning – an important aspect of the play's themes.
Examiner comment – high

This essay is distinguished by a very good ability to select detailed textual knowledge, a sustained focus on the question and some perceptive personal insights into the dramatic effect of Pinter’s use of a pair of antagonists to maximise the potential for comedy and menace. The candidate confidently ranges around the text to cover aspects of the relationship: the power dynamics and co-dependency from the initial discussions on the nature of ‘the job’ through to the change in the dynamic when McCann refuses to ‘go up there again’ and has to blow into Goldberg’s mouth to bring him back from his breakdown. Throughout there is intelligent understanding of a range of dramatic methods used to present the characters, such as the effect of their delayed entrance, the deceptive nature of their repartee, Goldberg’s expansiveness, use of cliché and ‘universal memories’ in comparison to McCann’s silences and the visual impact of his tearing the newspaper into strips. There is at various points in the essay some sustained, intelligent analysis of the dialogue: the way the two characters pick up on each other’s cues so that they often ‘seem like two halves of the same entity’, which with the ‘linguistic absurdity’ increases the opportunities for comedy while at the same time increasing the menace. A real appreciation of the text as a dramatic experience is evident in the personal response to the interrogation scenes and for all the above reasons this essay was awarded 23 marks in the lower half of Band 1.

The essay could have been improved by using some knowledge of the literary context, some application of the ideas about the Theatre of the Absurd to sharpen and extend the discussion on dramatic effect, particularly on the idea of menace, or some further discussion about the significance of the dramatic characters in terms of Pinter’s social and political concerns.

Total mark awarded = 23 out of 25
Goldberg and McCann are two of the main characters in the play 'The Birthday Party' written by Harold Pinter. The enter the play as lodgers but there is suspicion from the start regarding their intentions. They are shown to be agents of the organisation 'Cell on a mission' to get Stanley.

McCann and Goldberg both are very ambiguous about their past and mislead the organisation right from the beginning of their introduction. Goldberg for example keeps on changing names when he recounts his past and alters his story. He and McCann also never really clarify what their exact jobs are or what the function of the organisation they work for is. They keep the other characters and the audience in the dark about their intentions till the very resolution of the play. This ambiguity complements the absurdist element in the play and sets up the basis for doubts and suspicion to arise in the play.

Goldberg and McCann have a very interesting relationship as they are shown to be very detached and unaware of each other's past, they work together well as a team to complete their mission. When Goldberg keeps changing his name when recounting his past from 'Nicky' to 'Nat' and changes the name of his son too, McCann calls him up on it and questions him showing us that he is as much unaware about Goldberg's past as the rest of the characters although he is his partner. Despite this they seem to work together well as we see that they succeed in completing their mission which is problematical for someone to work well with
Example candidate response – middle, continued

Someone, they need to know them to avoid conflict which is not the case here showing the general detachment of the people in the society at that time.

Furthermore, Goldberg is represented as the one calling the shots in their relationship with McCann subversive to him. This can be seen as when they first enter, McCann is shown to be carrying two briefcases while Goldberg is only carrying one clearly showing Goldberg as the dominating one in their duo. Also, further in the play, McCann keeps repeating what Goldberg just said and follows his orders when Goldberg tells McCann to take Stanley’s glasses, he obligingly follows his commands. Moreover, Goldberg is shown to be the calm and collected one of the two, the one who doesn’t have a breakdown while McCann gives in to violence easily and has a breakdown while talking to Stanley, but then is controlled by Goldberg showing his power of McCann. We never see Goldberg and McCann engaged in a power struggle, Goldberg’s power is predefined and unchallengeable by McCann as we are told that Goldberg was approached with the mission and he was the one who chose McCann as his partner as he says, “So naturally they approached one with the mission and can you tell who I asked for?” This avoids conflict between Goldberg and McCann and helps their team dynamics. We are also shown that when they first arrive, Goldberg
Example candidate response – middle, continued

has all the information while McCann is relatively still in the dark as he keeps asking "is this the right house," while Goldberg seems to have all the answers and knowledge, further establishing his power.

Goldberg and McCann also seem to be the only characters who come up without having these ellipses and pauses between them and constant repetitions as in the cases of Meg and Peter and Meg and Stanley when Meg asks Peter about breakfast and constantly repeats it. This shows that their relationship has more substance than the relationship between the other characters, and is more significant. It also signifies that they don't have illusions or pretenses between them. They are focused on the mission assigned to them, which is to bring back Stanley and that is their reality. They are very dedicated to it and are very purposeful in their actions. In their relationship Goldberg seems to be the one with the means for example he has the car and knowledge and so naturally raises his position over McCann.

Goldberg and McCann have a very interesting relationship which plays a very pivotal role in moving the story forward. Goldberg and McCann first and foremost dominate the other characters in the play. Although they are just lodgers, they seem to be calling the shots in the house, especially Goldberg boring everyone about as he says, "Everyone move, stop!" and "Everyone quiet!" During the birthday party when a game, a blackout occurs and the torch is knocked out of McCann's hand. Goldberg also seems to be in...
control of Meg and the events that take place in her house. Goldberg and McLam bully Stanley and take him away from the house, manipulate Meg into hosting a birthday party for Stanley and starting the game. They also act against Pete's wishes while taking away Stanley even though Pete tries to stop them, which is ironic as Pete is the owner of the house and should be the one in control of what happens in the house. They dominate all the characters from the moment they arrive even though they are the new lodgers. Their relationship is also the driving force behind the progression of the play. Its dramatic importance can be seen as they entered from the back door, right after Meg's conversation with Pete and Stanley, which was filled with repetition and pauses, therefore halting the play in one scene but were annual directly afterward signified the progression of the play. The significance of the back door is that it represents an escape route of the characters but their coming in through the back door signifies that they have blocked the escape of the other characters, a fact which is further strengthened later on in the play when McLam prevents Stanley from leaving the kitchen by standing in his path. Their arrival also sets off other events such as the birthday party and the games, which are important to the resolution of the play. They are also the reason for the breakdown of Stanley by McCann. Taking away his glasses and initiating the game. They also represent the fears of the other characters.
Examiner comment – middle

This essay focuses on the question of Goldberg and McCann’s relationship with some clear understanding of their roles and some competence in selecting direct references and quotations to support some straightforward ideas about their characters and relationship. The introduction is purposeful with some appreciation of the ways Pinter uses ambiguity to shape an audience’s response and there is some supported discussion on the power dynamics between the two characters and the way they dominate the other characters to show ‘their relationship is the driving force behind the progression of the play’. The approach is explanatory and fairly typical of answers on the borderline between Bands 4 and 3 because it covers obvious aspects of the action in a factual but generalised way. However, there is evidence of personal response to language in the use of repetition to show McCann’s subservience to Goldberg, and in the use of the quotation to show how Goldberg avoids conflict with McCann. There is the beginning of some insight into the effects of the writing in the observation about the difference in the way Goldberg and McCann converse ‘without ellipses and pauses’, in comparison to the other characters is used to support the personal view that there is more substance to their relationship because they are focused on their mission.

Throughout the discussion, there is appreciation of some aspects of dramatic method for example, the significance of their arrival by the back door, though discussion of their symbolic significance is restricted. For these reasons the essay was awarded 15 marks, just into Band 3.

More detailed knowledge of some of the scenes would have helped to support and develop ideas about the characters’ significance and some sense of the literary context might have informed discussion about dramatic methods and effects.

**Total mark awarded = 15 out of 25**
The turn's return as adults to Ayeguam was considerably significant narratively. The essay is able to draw on limited detail and therefore the task is partial and restricted to.

'‘The Birthday Party' written by Harold Pinter is a classic example of the theatre of the absurd and much of his work is inspired by the work of Samuel Beckett. Two main characters of this play are Goldberg and McCann. They are portrayed as antagonists in the play as they have the objective to harm Stanley, who is the protagonist.

The relationship between Goldberg and McCann is quite complex at times and understandable at others. Something which is understood by the audience is that they are both colleagues who work at the same organization and have come to Meg's boundary house with a specific task to harm Stanley who is already staying there. Most of the times the relationship between them is confusing and keeps changing. That's one thing about the theatre of the absurd that nothing is certain about anything happening.

At first, it is noticed by the audience that Goldberg is quite strong and cunning and is
Example candidate response – low, continued

[Handwritten text]

- although

- it might be

- more debated

- a completely opposite

- of Goldberg

- and is always jump- ing around,

- making mistakes

- is very surprising

- as he is always unclear

- about his own self. This can

- be seen by the fact that he

- is even told by different names at
different times to the same people.

- He called himself many once, his
relationship with Goldberg was of
- a colleague and a co-worker.

- Most of the time it was

- observed that they would blame
- each other for any mistake and
- their talks wouldn’t make much
- sense. They would talk until each

- was amazed by
- the preview

- what I had

- understood

- and was

- impressed.
Example candidate response – low, continued

other in a very strange way, talking of things that are completely out of context.

However, towards the end of the play their roles seemed to change. Goldsbury started acted sensible, like McLain and McLain became sensible and did things that a mature character would do. This change in their roles is abrupt and brought surprise to the audience.

The relationship between Goldsbury and McLain had a great dramatic significance in the play as a whole due to a number of reasons. Their relationship gave the audience an insight into the type of relationship that the theatre of the absurd was trying to make real. It was their relationship which made it somewhat understandable to the audience the reason they were there in the beginning more and the main factor was that it gave an insight into the character of Stanley, as it was after the meeting of Goldsbury and McLain that Stanley started opening up, trying to justify and hide his past or if he has committed something heinous. The relationship between Goldsbury and McLain was
Example candidate response – low, continued

Examiner comment – low

The candidate attempts to focus on the question and offers a brief description of the individual characters, their relationship and roles in the play, but discussion is characterised by a tendency to simplify and generalise and is limited by a lack of specific references to the text. For example, in the brief description of Goldberg there is some understanding of how Pinter shapes an audience’s response to him ‘by the way he talks’: that his changing of topic when questioned reveals some ‘cunning’ and references to walks in the park or a perfect wife give ‘no insight to anyone about his background or anything’. However, understanding of the dramatic significance of this is limited to the assertion of the need to protect his identity. Textual knowledge is sometimes insecure – as in the issue of names for McCann – or very generalised. The characters’ relationship is restricted to the idea of co-workers who ‘blame each other for any mistakes’ and talk in a very strange way...of things that are completely out of context’. This assertion implies some basic understanding of method but needs supporting evidence and comment. For these reasons the essay was awarded 8 marks in Band 5. The response is clear in outline with some evidence of personal response, but to lift this answer into a higher band there needed to be some clearer reference to their actions in relation to Stanley beyond causing ‘a neurotic breakdown’ with some fuller discussion of their dramatic significance and the ways Pinter creates dramatic effect. For example, the observation that the audience is ‘surprised’ at a change in the characters’ relationship needed support and development to demonstrate some clear understanding both of Pinter’s dramatic methods and of characteristics of the Theatre of the Absurd.

Total mark awarded = 8 out of 25
**Question 6b**


**Example candidate response – high**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>b.</th>
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| P | This is perhaps the most horrifying and chaotic scene in the play. These effects are achieved through startling violence and dialogue which reflects the panic felt by the usually composed characters, Goldberg and McCann. The darkness of the scene and the violence carried out by the characters is heavily symbolic and helps to signify that Stanley’s character has undergone an irreversible change. The women return to their usual role of helplessness, childish innocence and sexual objectification.

This scene occurs after McCann and Stella Goldberg have interrogated an unarticulate and inert Stanley; they negotiate his existence and then attempt to build him a new past, a new identity by telling him his prospects. Stanley’s first actual after this situation and altered interrogation are hence dramatically intense and long-awaited by the audience. But in Pinter’s world, language is used as a tool to conceal rather than reveal the truth. Moreover, it is incredibly sparse and hence action takes on a deeply significant role. Pinter’s very specific stage directions have often involved characters moving about the stage in silence.
and war-like manoeuvres, and as they attempt to assert their dominance through the claiming of territory in this domestic space.

Stanley has been silent, sealed and sealed for the duration of the party thus far, although placed centre stage. The moving about the stage, as he moves across it, slowly, is deeply meaningful and dramatic. This is reflected in the response of McCann who appears to be sizing up the new Stanley, taking measures to control and contain him.

From their arrival at the house, McCann and Goldberg are imbued with a powerful sense of menace which has not, thus far, been literally calculated.

It has been cleared by Goldberg’s feigned pleasantries and the symbolic threat of McCann’s tearing of newspapers which displayed a methodical threat of violence. Here, the threat takes on its first literal form against Stanley. McCann’s breaking of Stanley’s plates and Goldberg’s orders that he should lie subdued are a symbolic acts of oppression. Stanley’s loss of sight is expected to take on a metaphorical and permanent form as it prefaces and reinforces his loss of personal autonomy.
Before the blackout, at least, Goldberg and McCann are shown to be in complete control. They order Stanley and Iga about. Goldberg divides the goatherd, telling everyone when to move and when to stand still. Keeping in mind the symbolic significance of movement on stage bears over the power dynamics between characters, Goldberg's control of the situation is daunting and revealing.

The drum as an important symbol of Stanley's steady descent from independent beerliness to pruned subordination. It also reinforced the theme of Fennian malice and which Meg had tried to take on. The drum was a gift to Stanley from Meg to replace his piano and also vie for Stanley to take it and be a master of the drum, which illustrated a regression to boyhood and then savagery.

McCann's placing of the drum in Stanley's path reinforces the deliberate and inexcusable violence. Stanley as a victim of the breaking of the drum, however, also signifies a change in Meg and Stanley's relationship, a severance of ties.
Example candidate response – high, continued

Stanley’s violent attempt to strangle Meg is made all the more disturbing by Stanley’s slow movements before he turns on Meg. Meg has been portrayed as an innocent, paradoxically child-like and vulnerable figure. The fact that Stanley, worthless and attackable, lies, then illustrates his total descent to a feral and bestial state.

This event triggers a refreshingly pandy and Goldberg. Thus far, they have been almost wholly cool and composed and self-assured. Goldberg earlier told McCann that “this presumably Stanley) would be a job above any other. Goldberg and McCann’s panic and fumbling show the audience the last chance in their control over the situation. Their repeated questions create a sense of chaos, as well as while evolving their frantic desire to regain control: “Where is he?” “What happened?” “Where is your torch?” “Where is she?” “What’s that?”

Goldberg, particularly, has been depicted as possessing a wealth of knowledge and memories untapped by any other totally unique to him. The verbal speed and language evolvingwarm
memories of an idealised past and identity. His panic and confusion, and sheer lack of words (in short lines) are hence frightening and unusual. The audience sees both Goldblatt and McCann at a previously unimaginable level of vulnerability. Their previously unscathed power has to be regained forcefully and renegotiated, as Goldblatt tells him to 'get down on her knees'; he later tries to regain his usually effortless composure, "come to me, come to me, easy. Over here."

All these sounds, actions and dialogues are made all the more dramatically intense in the unexpected blackout. The darkness creates a sense of suspense and also evokes an existential uneasiness. The "r-r-a-r-r-a," of the drum and Lulu's whimpering are sickeningly discordant, adding to the dramatic intensity of the scene. Lulu and Weg are almost background noise in much of the scene. They have been portrayed as childish and helpless, especially Weg. Their 'oohs' and 'aahs' intensify the scene and reinforce their
| Q | role of helplessness, dull legal
|   | previously enjoyed some sort
|   | power over Stanley, having rejected
|   | him and belittled him, calling
|   | him a 'washout'. She has also
|   | been objected by his telling her
|   | to get on her knees (this was a
|   | sexual exploitation). Stanley's
|   | graphic and screening implied rape
|   | of the compound by age of
|   | sexual exploitation. Stulce's disappearance
|   | adds to the chaos in the scene,
|   | while Stanley's giggle disturb
|   | the audience and emphasized his
|   | descent into madness.
|   | This has been the most violent
|   | scene and completely changes the
|   | previously normal power dynamics
|   | between the characters, as well as
|   | the audience's view of Stanley
|   | each character. |
Examiner comment – high

This essay is highly rewarded because it is successful in sustaining the focus on the question. Using a detailed running commentary approach, it combines a moment by moment discussion of the dramatic effects within the scene with confident, well-integrated references to the wider text to show how the presentation of the characters elsewhere contributes to the impact of the dramatic effects on the audience in this extract. A good example of this is the intelligent personal response to the characters’ reactions after the lights go out.

Less assured candidates attempt to use the sequence of short questions and repetition to support a critical view that Pinter wishes to suggest the inadequacies of language for communication and the meaningless nature of human relationships and experience. This candidate considers the language in the context of the dramatic situation and makes intelligent links to the authoritative presence of Goldberg and McCann elsewhere. Reference to Goldberg’s eloquent speeches and memories of an idealised past and identity are contrasted with the short nature of the questions to support the personal insight that the audience see Goldberg and McCann at a ‘previously unthinkable level of vulnerability’ here, desperately attempting to regain control.

The essay is well structured: the opening signposts the areas of discussion and the final paragraphs, in focusing on the women, tie the essay back to the introduction and question. The conclusion about the shift in power dynamics has been illustrated in the discussion of all the characters – including the significance of the breaking of the drum for Meg and Stanley’s relationship and seeing Stanley’s attack on Lulu in relation to her earlier rejection of him. Within this there is very good, comprehensive discussion of the dramatic effects produced by a range of methods: the use of language, different sound effects, action and the effect of the blackout which shows the candidate’s analytical skills and personal appreciation of the text as a theatrical experience. For this reason the essay was awarded a Band 1 with 23 marks, needing just a little more complexity a brief discussion of the wider significance of the play to gain it full marks.

Total mark awarded = 23 out of 25
Example candidate response – middle

Harold Pinter; A Birthday Party

6 (b) Throughout the passage Pinter not only utilises the dialogues and actions of each character to reveal something about themselves but also the connection between each character. They play off each other, like pieces of chess, words and actions are there,arnaen, weighty certain responses form the audience.

"Give me the scarp. Tie his scarp. Mrs. Bobes. That's what I'm doing. Can you see my nose? He can't."

The beginning dialogue between Meg and Goldberg proves to the audience how he is a man with a mission. This can be seen as Meg initially acts Goldberg if he can see her nose but his response is only in relation to his target, Stanley's point of view. Goldberg is shown to be a man with a clear path and a clear idea of how to follow it. Furthermore, the fact that Meg is asking for instructions in her own home shows two things. How Goldberg is a man of words, a master silesario who can take control of any surrounding or Meg's weaknesses as a character. Just like previously in the play, the beginning of Act I, he was so distant. He was solely dependent on Patsey to give him simple answers approved to be her only link until the outside world.

Meg is childless and hence it becomes easy for Goldberg to manipulate her with a barrage of words. Twice Meg asks "Why has the light gone out?" Proving that she is rather lost.

The passage also reveals the deeply defined roles between the partnership of Goldberg and Mean.

"Where's your torch... Not on me! ... Where's your torch? Pick up your torch". A prime example which depicts how Goldberg is the man who provides a pathway for Mean to follow and easily conduct his actions.
"[McCann shoves the torch in Goldberg’s face]"

This stage direction showing that without Goldberg’s guidance, McCann’s actions are in disarray. Despite having clearly defined roles for the completion of the job, it must be noted that two are still interdependent on each other, as without one’s co-operation the other cannot function. The result of this statement can be seen when McCann “blows life” into Goldberg later on in the play.

However, considering it is a “BLACKOUT”, the audience would be perplexed to perceive Goldberg as a guiding force through their time as he becomes more actions to take. An interesting dynamic to note would be that of hulu and Goldberg. Conversely to Meg, hulu is far more self-aware of her surroundings. While Meg repetitiously asks why the light has gone, hulu before is already aware even before Goldberg.

"The lights! What’s happened? The lights!"

Then again, the audience has already perceived Goldberg as a master manipulator and that goes to show later on in the passage as “Hold me. Hold me. Cuck down on your knees”. This underscores the power dynamic that at first it was hulu who made Goldberg aware of the surrounding but it was Goldberg who had the last laugh as he then he was the one dominating the actions of hulu. The audience would see Goldberg as an over-winding authority figure. Moreover, they would see the two female characters as rather feeble and dependent as they both need guidance from men and gone in just as hulu previously sat on Goldberg’s lap merely only to later regret it. "I hulu and Goldberg upstairs centre, close together. I simple stage action proving Goldberg’s assertion over hulu."

Throughout the early few dialogues of the passage, McCann fits in as the character who takes the
Examine candidate response – middle, continued

rather symbolic action. ‘I’ll take your glasses’. Just like previously with the newspaper strips, the time McCann is responsible for taking over the vision of Stanley.

He is a dedicated follower even as time gets by.

struggled like he did in the beginning, before they took the job and even during the passage when he lost the touch or showed that he was wrong place. However, this passage creates an eerie aura around him when he is in his comfort zone. A rather trusted side comes out where astonishingly without Goldberg’s instructions he “picks up the drum and places it sideways in Stanley’s path”. This creates an aura of menace around the character coupled with his symbolic gestures which he uses freely.

Stanley and his character is revealed through only action. His conflict, his resistance, his joy is all shown through stage directions.

“[McCann takes Stanley’s glasses]” The main purpose of Goldberg and McCann was to give a rebirth to Stanley, change his outlook and liberal perception to the world of one with black and white. Perhaps more the audience sympathises, with a crucial sense being switched away.

“[Stanley walks into the drum and falls over with his feet caught in]... [he begins to move towards Meg... he begins to struggle. He].” These key stage directions depict the current power dynamic. Meg was previously Stanley’s comfort zone as he could establish some authority as he did previously when he questioned Mrs. Bokes about her tone with him. But now, she has “allied” with Goldberg, following his instructions which shows the resentment of Stanley and his insecurity. Moreover, it is also a symbol of the
Breaking all ties between Stanley and Mag as it shows the destruction of a present Stanley never really wanted.

Considering it is a total blackout, it can be assumed that the point of view taken is that of Stanley’s since he is blinded by his loss of sight.

Just as later on when hulu attacked Goldberg for using his son, even in this passage Stanley refutes Goldberg’s instructions: “I can’t.” Hence, this is what Stanley pushes on as he exploits the two things Goldberg could not control. One would be losing hulu as the “rat-a-tat” of the dynamite would signal his victory as he took apparent control over hulu. Moreover, Goldberg is now lost and that subliminally pressures Stanley as in search for hulu “[Goldberg and McCann turn and stumble against each other].”

Just like McCann, Stanley also possesses a feeling away as “I as soon as he tought hits him, begins to giggle.” This goes to show how Stanley needs in working against his captors, he wants independence and is doing everything in his power to achieve it. They took his sight, he took away their control. This provides not only a sense of sympathy but also evolves a sense of pride within Stanley which is passed on to the audience.

Through power struggles, exact stage directions and a powerful use of language, Pinter manages to evoke an array of responses from the audience.
Examiner comment – middle

The virtue of this essay is that it is a balanced answer, focusing on the characters as they are presented in the extract while supporting the discussion with some aptly chosen, specific references to the wider text. After a misreading at the start, the essay improves and makes straightforward intelligent points clearly. For example, an accumulation of details from the extract is used to support the sound observation that an audience would perceive Goldberg as ‘an over-riding authority figure’ in his interactions with Meg, McCann and Lulu, but the references to the wider text are also used to support comments on the other characters and to develop the discussion. The idea of Goldberg and McCann’s interdependence is extended by reference to the scene when McCann ‘blows life’ into Goldberg. Although the candidate passes over the opportunity to discuss the comic dramatic effect of McCann’s misdirection of the torchlight onto Goldberg’s face, there is some insight shown into the way Pinter increases the menace surrounding McCann’s actions when ‘astonishingly without Goldberg’s instructions’, he places the drum in Stanley’s path. There is sound understanding of the symbolic nature of the action, including of the significance of the breaking of the drum for Stanley and Meg’s relationship, which is discussed and used to support a personal view of Stanley’s motivation in attacking Meg. Throughout the essay there is some attention paid to audience response including the way an audience’s sympathy for Stanley changes in the scene.

The essay would have gained more marks if some points such as the symbolic significance of Stanley’s loss of vision and the brief reference to the critical notion of Stanley’s ‘rebirth’ were more strongly connected and discussed. This essay was awarded 16 marks in Band 3 because it offered a coherent, clearly structured response to the question and showed some appreciation of the text as a theatrical experience.

Total mark awarded = 16 out of 25
(c) In the play *The Birthday Party*, Pinter portrays unrealistic characters in a realistic situation. These characters have obscure motivations that present a subtle and overt violence of human relationships to produce an atmosphere of psychological unease. This play is a satirical play that satirizes bureaucratic institutions and the difficulties of communication, as well as apathy as a recurring theme in the play. Pinter's methods of creating a response from the audience includes the pause, pause, the stage directions and the sudden change of characters.

The stage directions in Pinter's play are very important because most of the action is seen in those parts of the play which then foreshadow the characters' future. "Stanley stands blindfold ... his foot caught in it," this shows how McCann is trying to harm Stanley and it is very clear that the strong-headed Stanley we saw in the beginning is now clearly being threatened. The blindfold represents Stanley's inability to look at the outside world - the people from the outside world, and this can be seen by the stage directions which shape the reactions of the audience who at this point might be increasingly involved in the character situations. The stage directions may possibly be forewarning Stanley's future in the play, thus the audience might be intrigued and in suspense of the end.

As all the characters are present in this scene, it increases the intensity of the play as each character is worried about something else and that interferes with the other character's issues, such as Lulu is concerned with 'the lights' and McCann is worried about his torch.
Example candidate response – low, continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meg</td>
<td>The language in the play is very simple, in this passage and elsewhere in the play, however, the dialogues are short and direct. The short dialogues increase the dramatic tension and the audience are fascinated by the characters. In this scene, we see a lot of chaos which is ironic because Meg and Peter's everyday lives were repetitive and boring. And all of a sudden, there seems to be chaos while the characters search for a torch, while others walk around etc. This erratic behaviour displays the lives of the outside world which Meg and Stanley try to avoid. This behaviour, action in the play makes the audience feel humorous yet laugh, and wait until the play moves forward, while they wait for the play to progress. Many of the questions the audience want answered are ambiguous, which is common throughout Pinter's play and this creates suspense for the readers. At the end of this scene, we are sure the audience is infuriated by Stanley's barbaric and animalistic nature in the play. We saw Stanley behave rudely in the beginning of Act 1 when he spoke to Meg, but the audience never saw the barbaric side of Stanley up until now, which leaves the audience to assume that maybe Stanley's past is also rather inhumane, thing happens. The stage directions especially allow the audience to create their own ideas of the character and their intentions. In other parts of the play, the characters are judged differently by the audience. Pinter's presentation of the characters in different situations at different times allows the audience to respond differently. For example, Peter throughout the scene play was seen as a calm, tame character, but at the end of Act</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Example candidate response – low, continued

| when he says ‘stanley don’t let them tell you what to do’ we see a different side of petey, a more dominant one. the action and aggressive tone create a response by the audience who is shocked to see that even the simplest of characters have so many dimensions. |

Examiner comment – low

This essay shows limited ability to focus on the question and extract, with occasional references to the wider text to support a few simple observations on Pinter’s dramatic methods and an audience’s response to characters. The introduction is generalised with some valid assertions about the ‘atmosphere of unease’ that stems from characters having ‘obscure motivations’ but discussion of the ‘overt violence’ is limited to the simple observation that McCann is ‘trying to harm’ Stanley. There is some basic understanding of character and dramatic effect in the contrast between the chaos of the action in the scene and the repetitive, boring lives of Meg and Petey, but to bring out the impact of the scene there needed to be some sense of how the ‘perceived threat of the outside world’ is generated by Goldberg and McCann.

Some sense of the context and the roles of the characters together with more detailed references to the extract would have enabled the candidate to develop many of the points into more substantial discussion. For example, though there is the apt reference to Stanley calling Meg ‘succulent’ in Act 1, this is not linked to his attack on Meg in the extract, and the valid assertion that an audience would be shocked at Stanley’s ‘barbaric and animalistic nature’ could have been supported by focusing on the dramatic methods used to reveal Stanley’s attack on Lulu. There is some basic understanding that the ‘short dialogues’ and the characters’ concerns about ‘the lights’ or the ‘torch’ increase the dramatic tension but discussion of both the language and the action needed more precise, detailed consideration. The essay attempts to cover a range of ideas but treatment of the extract is sketchy and attempts to broaden the discussion by touching on wider textual issues are either restricted or tangential to the question – such as the final point on the change in Petey. For these reasons the essay was awarded nine marks.

Total mark awarded for = 9 out of 25