



Examiners' Report
Summer 2026
GCSE English Language 1EN0 01

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Introduction

This report will provide an overview of performance, together with tips and comments, for Questions 1-6 of Paper 1 of the Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 GCSE in English Language (9–1) for the summer 2026 series.

The qualification consists of three components:

Unit 1: Fiction and Imaginative Writing - 40% (this examination)

Unit 2: Non-fiction and Transactional Writing - 60% (examination)

Unit 3: Spoken Language Endorsement (non-examination assessment)

This report will focus on Unit 1: Fiction and Imaginative Writing. The paper is assessed through a 1 hour 45 minutes examination. The total number of marks available is 64. The reading and writing sections on this paper are linked by a theme. This is an un-tiered specification and the choice of texts and questions set are such that all learners are able to access the paper and to show their abilities in reading and writing.

The focus of this component is:

Section A – Reading

Study and analyse selections from a range of prose fiction.

This paper features one unseen fiction extract from 19th-century prose fiction. The word count of this text is approximately 650 words.

The specification states that:

‘Students should read selections from a range of high-quality, challenging prose fiction, in preparation for responding to an unseen 19th-century prose fiction extract in the examination. They should be able to read substantial pieces of writing (extended texts) that make significant demands on them in terms of content, structure and the quality of language.’ (page 6)

There are four questions on the text, which are stepped in difficulty. Questions 1 and 2 are short response questions and questions 3 and 4 are extended response questions. Learners are recommended to spend one hour on section A.

Section B – Writing

This section allows learners to develop imaginative writing skills to engage the reader. There is a choice of two writing tasks, which are linked by a theme to the reading extracts. Learners pick one question to respond to. One of the writing tasks additionally provides two images that learners can use to help them generate ideas for their writing. Learners can write a response that draws on just one or neither of the images. In November 2025, the images were part of Question 5.

The specification states that:

‘Students should use what they have learned about the writer’s craft in their reading of fiction to inspire and influence their own imaginative writing. They should develop a range of creative writing techniques, and planning and proofreading skills.’ (page 6)

Learners are recommended to spend 45 minutes on section B.

The Assessment Objectives for this paper are:

Section A – Reading

AO1: Identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas (Q1 and Q2)

AO2: Explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and influence readers, using relevant subject terminology to support their views (Q3)

AO4: Evaluate texts critically and support this with appropriate textual references (Q4)

Section B – Writing

AO5:

Communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively, selecting and adapting tone, style and register for different forms, purposes and audiences (Q5 and Q6)

Organise information and ideas, using structural and grammatical features to support coherence and cohesion of texts (Q5 and Q6)

AO6:

Learners must use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation (Q5 and Q6)

Mark breakdown

Question 1: 1 mark (AO1)

Question 2: 2 marks (AO1)

Question 3: 6 marks (AO2)

Question 4: 15 marks (AO4)

Questions 5 and 6: 40 marks (AO5 24 marks, AO6 16 marks)

Total mark available: 64

Question 1

Section A

In the summer 2026 series, the extract was from *The Golden Ingot* by Fitz-James O'Brien. It was evident from the responses seen across the reading section of the paper that learners found the text to be accessible, with many showing clear and sometimes insightful understanding of the extract.

Question 1

Question 1 is a single mark question, which requires understanding of AO1: 'identify and interpret'. This low-tariff question is intended to lead learners into the examination and was successfully done by the majority of learners in the summer 2026 paper.

Question 1 asked learners to identify a word or phrase which shows that the writer is unhappy (from lines 1–3).

There was one correct answer:

· 'grumbled'

The important advice for this question is to read what is being asked for and to select the correct information. Learners should ensure that their response is selected from the lines indicated in the question.

Some learners copied out a phrase, which included the correct answer. This is sufficient for a mark. Other learners saved some time by writing just the one word, which answered the question, and gained the mark for this question.

The learners who did not achieve a mark for this question did not address the question. Learners must ensure that their answer responds to the question being asked. For example, some learners responded to this question with single words such as 'violently', 'aroused' or 'trivial' or the phrase 'retired to rest', which do not show that the writer is unhappy.

Learners should provide some evidence of selection, and, therefore, copying out all the lines stipulated in the question would not be sufficient for a mark.

1 From lines 1–3, identify a word or phrase which shows that the writer is unhappy.

~~retired~~ ~~and grumbled~~



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This response is taken from the stipulated lines but does not answer the question. It does not show that the writer is unhappy. The correct answer has been crossed out and cannot be credited.

Mark: 0

Section A of this paper is a test of reading and so it is vital the question is read carefully.

1 From lines 1–3, identify a word or phrase which shows that the writer is unhappy.

i had been ~~awake~~ aroused long after
midnight.

(Total for Question 1 = 1 mark)

The learner has selected a phrase from the stipulated lines, which is an acceptable approach. However, the phrase does not show that the writer is unhappy.
Mark: 0

Learners should ensure that they are clear on the focus of the question.

1 From lines 1–3, identify a word or phrase which shows that the writer is unhappy.

i grumbled as i rose

The learner has selected a phrase from the stipulated lines that includes 'grumbled' (which is the correct answer).
Mark: 1

There should be evidence of selection from the lines given. This answer does that successfully.

1 From lines 1–3, identify a word or phrase which shows that the writer is unhappy.

"I said nastily"

This response is taken from outside the given lines and does not address the question.
Mark: 0

Learners should make sure that the response given is taken from the lines stipulated in the question.

1 From lines 1–3, identify a word or phrase which shows that the writer is unhappy.

"grumbled"

A correct selection of the single-word answer has been made.
Mark: 1

Selecting a single-word answer is an effective use of time.

Question 2

Question 2

Question 2 is worth two marks and, as per question 1, tests learners' ability to identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas. This question develops from question 1 by asking learners to focus upon a longer section of text and by allowing learners to express answers in their own words as well as by using quotations from the text. This question asked learners to give two things that the reader learns about the weather from the relevant lines printed in the question paper.

This question was answered successfully by learners, with the majority achieving full marks (two marks). All of the examples given in the mark scheme were seen in responses either as quotations or own words:

- it has been snowing
- the snow is deep, 'ankle deep'
- it is 'cloudy'
- it is (very) cold, the woman's teeth are 'rattling like castanets'
- he is eager to close the door because of the bad weather
- it is gusty or very windy
- the wind is strong, it was 'rapidly forcing an entrance through the half-open door'

The best answers were those that selected concise evidence from the text, thereby saving time for the subsequent questions in the paper. The most commonly seen correct answers were 'ankle deep in snow', 'cold', 'windy' and 'cloudy'.

As has been the case in previous series, a few learners did not achieve two marks because they referred to text from outside the line references given. If learners use the section of text printed on the question paper, rather than the looking at the whole extract, they are less likely to make this mistake.

Some learners failed to provide two parts to their answer. For example, a few learners just gave an answer such as 'the wind was rapidly forcing an entrance through the half-open door'. An answer like this would be worthy of one mark but not two. However, if broken down, it would be worthy of two marks. For example, the idea that it is very windy (bullet point 6 of the mark scheme) and that the wind is strong (bullet point 7 of the mark scheme). The layout of the answer space, with its use of separate lines numbered 1 and 2, is intended to help learners to structure their responses to this question and to ensure that they include two things, in order to gain the two marks that are available.

Other learners did not address the question sufficiently. For example, some learners copied the quotation 'rattling like castanets'. This would not be creditworthy alone as it does not tell the reader about the weather. However, with some elaboration, such as how this quotation shows that the weather is cold, the response would be creditworthy. Also, some learners selected the quotation 'rapidly forcing an entrance' without identifying that it was the wind forcing the entrance, so did not gain a mark.

Learners should ensure that they read the question carefully and provide responses that address the question.

2 Read this extract.

A woman was standing ankle deep in the snow that lay upon the step. I caught but a dim glimpse of her, for the night was cloudy; but I could hear her teeth rattling like castanets.**

"Come in, come in, my good woman," I said hastily, for the wind seemed to catch eagerly at the opportunity of making itself at home in my hall, and was rapidly forcing an entrance through the half-open door.

From the extract, give **two** things that the reader learns about the weather.

You may use your own words or quotations from the text.

- 1 Come in come in my good woman.
- 2 half - open door

The learner has selected two phrases from the given lines. However, neither of the responses address the question and are, therefore, not creditworthy.

Mark: 0

Learners should read the question carefully to ensure that they answer the question.

From the extract, give **two** things that the reader learns about the weather.

You may use your own words or quotations from the text.

- 1 "ankle deep in snow"
- 2 "For the night was cloudy."

The learner has correctly selected two quotations from the text that focus on the weather: 'snow' and 'cloudy'.

Mark: 2

Selecting appropriate quotations from the text that address the question is an acceptable approach and can save time, rather than writing in own words.

From the extract, give **two** things that the reader learns about the weather.

You may use your own words or quotations from the text.

1 A woman was standing ankle deep
in the snow that lay upon the step.
2 and was rapidly forcing an entrance
through the half-open door.

The first response correctly makes reference to the snow for 1 mark. The second response does not identify that it is the wind 'rapidly forcing an entrance' and is, therefore, not creditworthy.

Mark: 1

Learners should make sure that quotations selected from the text sufficiently address the question.

From the extract, give **two** things that the reader learns about the weather.

You may use your own words or quotations from the text.

1 "A women standing ankle deep in snow"

2 "I could here hear her ~~the~~^{teeth} rattling like castanets"

The first response correctly makes reference to snow for 1 mark. The second response does not tell the reader about the weather directly. A comment, such as how the quotation shows that it is cold, would be needed to address the question. Mark: 1

Unlike Question 1, this question explicitly states that you can 'use your own words or quotations from the text'. This answer uses quotations for both parts, but sometimes learners might find it easier to sum things up in their own words and that is OK for Question 2.

From the extract, give **two** things that the reader learns about the weather.

You may use your own words or quotations from the text.

1 "I caught but a dim glimpse of her."

2 "The wind seemed to catch eagerly."

The first response does not address the question directly and is not creditworthy. The second response makes reference to the wind and can be credited.

Mark: 1

The two separate answer spaces, numbered 1 and 2, are there to help learners to find two distinct answers.

Question 3

Question 3

Question 3 is worth six marks and tests learners' ability to explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and influence readers, using relevant subject terminology to support their views. The most notable feature of this question is that it asks learners to comment upon both language and structure.

The mark scheme is split into three levels of two marks each and it is worth noting that the mark scheme states that 'The mark awarded cannot progress beyond the top of Level 1 if only language OR structure has been considered.' This is an important feature and one that centres should make learners fully aware of. In order to access the marks in levels two and three, it is not necessary for the language and structure comments to be equally weighted, only that the answer must contain reference to both.

Learners should use the mark tariff as a guide about how much to write in response to this question and it is quite possible to attain all six marks in the space provided in the answer booklet. Indeed, it is not necessary for learners to write beyond the space provided in order to be able to achieve full marks. Learners should also take care not to spend too long responding to question 3 at the expense of later questions in the paper.

In the summer 2026 paper, learners were asked to consider how the writer uses language and structure in the given lines to describe the arrival of the woman.

It was pleasing to see that many responses had considered both language and structure, with it being apparent that learners had been encouraged to be aware of structural points in addition to language points. Many learners were able to pick out both elements of language and structure in the text using well-selected quotation/references.

The more successful answers offered a balanced analysis of how the writer uses features of both language and structure to describe the arrival of the woman.

Popular points in relation to language included:

- the writer's use of similes to present the woman as ghostly and skeletal: 'slipped in like a ghost' and 'as if some skeleton was chattering'
- the use of adjectives and adverbs to create a sense of seriousness and urgency: 'severe accident', 'instant surgical aid', 'to come immediately' and 'terribly wounded'
- the personification of the wind to create a sense of danger or unwelcome intrusion, creating further irritation for the doctor
- the use of adjectives to describe the physical appearance of the woman: 'pale, thin face and large eyes'
- the emotive language used throughout the extract, indicative of the heightened emotions in the tense situation.

Popular points in relation to structure included:

- the use of a single-sentence paragraph at the start of the text, indicative of the need for immediate action
- how repetition is used to show Doctor Luxor's sense of urgency: 'Come in, come in'
- the pathetic fallacy of the wind and how this is used to foreshadow the bad events to follow
- the overall structure of the text: the initial irritation, the intrigue and then the shock
- the use of short sentences for impact: 'I entreat you to come immediately'.

The most successful responses integrated points in relation to both language and structure, with precise quotations selected from the text to support the points made.

It was interesting to read the wide range of points made by learners, showing that they had thought carefully about the meaning conveyed in the text. For example, a few learners considered how the fact that the woman's teeth were 'still clicking in the dark hall' could be deemed to be like a clock ticking, suggesting that she did not have much time left to save her father. Some learners also considered how the complex sentence in the opening paragraph was a reflection of the wind 'forcing an entrance'.

The less successful responses wrote about only language or structure (and were, therefore, capped at the top of Level 1). There was evidence that some learners found identifying structural points more challenging than finding language points. Some introduced a point as a structural one but then considered a language feature.

Some learners only offered comments upon isolated features, merely identified techniques without considering effects, did not clearly explain the effects that the writer had sought to achieve and were not able to examine in detail those features. As a result, they were not able to reach the marks in levels two and three. Other less successful responses tended to provide a summary of the text, rather than considering the use of language and structure. Learners should avoid providing general comment on techniques, such as 'this makes the reader imagine it' or 'makes the reader want to read on'.

Learners should be reminded that responses should be based on the lines printed in the question paper. Some learners lost marks as a result of, at least in part, referring to outside of the given lines.

There was also evidence that some learners thought AO4 was assessed in question 3, with evaluative language used throughout some responses. In such cases, whilst learners often considered the use of both language and structure, the time spent attempting to evaluate the text could have been better spent providing further detail in relation to AO2.

3 Read this extract.

"Come in, come in, my good woman," I said hastily, for the wind seemed to catch eagerly at the opportunity of making itself at home in my hall, and was rapidly forcing an entrance through the half-open door.

Supernatural - weird
She slipped in like a ghost, and I closed the door. While I was striking a light, I could hear her teeth still clicking in the dark hall, till it seemed as if some skeleton was chattering. I begged her to enter the room and asked her what her business was.

"My father has met with a severe accident," she said, "and requires instant surgical aid. I entreat you to come immediately."

Kind
The freshness and the melody of her voice startled me. I looked at her attentively, but, owing to a shawl in which her head was wrapped, I could discern nothing beyond a pale, thin face and large eyes. Her dress was lamentable.*** An old silk, of a colour now unrecognisable, clung to her figure. The creases where it had been folded were worn nearly through, and the edges of the skirt were clotted and discoloured with mud.

Question - Interesting
"In what manner was your father hurt?" I asked.

"He blew himself up, sir, and is terribly wounded."

In the extract, how does the writer use language and structure to describe the arrival of the woman?

Support your views with reference to the text.

2 paragraphs

(6)
The writer uses language to describe the arrival of the woman as *freshening*.
The "Freshness" of her voice had startled the writer. The adjective "freshness" is used to suggest that her kindness in her voice was a breath of fresh air as it had "startled" the writer.

The writer uses ~~the~~ structure techniques to describe the arrival of the woman. The writer uses a question, "In what manner was your father hurt?" to suggest that she was interesting. This is because her appearance of "old silk" made ~~him~~ the writer curious to why she's in the writer's house.

The learner has made use of the extract printed in the question paper by annotating different features used in the text. This approach can help learners to focus on the features they would like to explore.

The first paragraph attempts to comment on the language used in the extract and the second paragraph comments on a structural device. The selection of references is valid but not developed. The descriptors for Level 1 have been met in full. The response lacks the necessary explanation for Level 2.

Level 1, 2 marks

Learners' annotation of the extract can help them to focus on aspects of the extract they can write about in their answer.

3 Read this extract.

↑ repetition
 "Come in, come in, my good woman," I said hastily, for the wind seemed to catch eagerly at the opportunity of making itself at home in my hall, and was rapidly forcing an entrance through the half-open door.

simile
 She slipped in like a ghost, and I closed the door. While I was striking a light, I could hear her teeth still clicking in the dark hall, till it seemed as if some skeleton was chattering. I begged her to enter the room and asked her what her business was.

"My father has met with a severe accident," she said, "and requires instant surgical aid. I entreat you to come immediately."

The freshness and the melody of her voice startled me. I looked at her attentively, but, owing to a shawl in which her head was wrapped, I could discern nothing beyond a pale, thin face and large eyes. Her dress was lamentable.*** An old silk, of a colour now unrecognisable, clung to her figure. The creases where it had been folded were worn nearly through, and the edges of the skirt were clotted and discoloured with mud.

"In what manner was your father hurt?" I asked.

"He blew himself up, sir, and is terribly wounded."

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 & struc

In the extract, how does the writer use language and structure to describe the arrival of the woman?

PEE explanation?

Support your views with reference to the text.

(6)

Within this extract the writer swiftly uses ~~language~~ a simile to describe the arrival of the woman; shown in the quote, "She slipped in like a ghost." This quote describes the arrival of the woman as a very quiet and composed manner, the verb of the word ~~slipped~~ ^{calm} "slipped" suggest a composed polite nature of the woman

and unexpected in a way like almost describing a thief. The term "~~at~~ like a ghost" suggests that ~~he~~ she was maybe thrown off with how the woman made her entrance as the supernatural tend to be a negative connotation.

Another way the writer deliberately uses language to form the description of the arrival of the woman is by using metaphors within the text. Backed up with the quote, "as if some skeleton was chattering" I would argue and debate whether if this was instead ~~an~~ ^{personification} as skeletons aren't living things and chattering is a very much alive thing to do but regardless, with this quote it shows that the woman is in an emergency and unprepared for the sudden weather as she is cold shown in the word "chattering" but the word "skeleton" ~~shows~~ connotes ~~an~~ ^{unprepared} subtle arrival and that she arrived in the cold in an ~~unexpected~~ hour.

(Total for Question 3 = 6 marks)

This response is capped at the top of Level 1 because it purely focuses on language and no points have been made in relation to structure.

The response considers language devices, including the use of a simile and the meaning of particular words. Although the response moves beyond 'comment', the Level 1 descriptor, no points have been made in relation to structure and, therefore, this response is restricted to marks in Level 1.

Level 1, 2 marks

Learners should ensure they exam the writer's use of both language and structure to access marks beyond Level 1.

In the extract, how does the writer use language and structure to describe the arrival of the woman?

Support your views with reference to the text.

(6)
In the extract the writer describes the arrival of the woman by the entrance through the door. This is evident in the line "she slipped in like a ghost." The simile shows and suggests that the woman entered very quickly and quietly as shown by the word "ghost" as ghosts are quiet and invisible. This is further developed in the line "till it seemed as if some skeleton was chattering" the repeated simile about the supernatural shows the woman's way of entering was very

unnatural and peculiar to the writer.

The writer also describes the woman's arrival by the descriptions of her bizarre looks. This is evident in the line "beyond a pale, thin face and large eyes." The listing of uncomfortable descriptions of the woman further shows the ~~writer~~ protagonist's fear and confusion towards the woman due to her unnatural looks and frightening actions. This is further developed in the line "Her dress was lamentable." The adjective look emphasizes how the woman is ~~fur~~ from normal making the protagonist further fear her arrival.

In the response, the learner identifies features in relation to both language and structure: a simile and listing. Each point is substantiated with a quotation and a personal explanation. Subject terminology has been used but there is evidence of misidentification, such as the adjective 'look'.

The general quality of explanation means the response meets all of the criteria for Level 2; the references for each point are relevant and appropriate. It does not access Level 3 marks as it is not able to move on from explanation to analysis.

Level 2, 4 marks

Learners should try to move on from simple explanation to analysis, which is a more detailed examination of the writer's use of language and structure and the impact upon the reader.

3 Read this extract.

"Come in, come in, my good woman," I said hastily, for the wind seemed to catch eagerly at the opportunity of making itself at home in my hall, and was rapidly forcing an entrance through the half-open door.

She slipped in like a ghost, and I closed the door. While I was striking a light, I could hear her teeth still clicking in the dark hall, till it seemed as if some skeleton was chattering. I begged her to enter the room and asked her what her business was.

"My father has met with a severe accident," she said, "and requires instant surgical aid. I entreat you to come immediately."

The freshness and the melody of her voice startled me. I looked at her attentively, but, owing to a shawl in which her head was wrapped, I could discern nothing beyond a pale, thin face and large eyes. Her dress was lamentable.*** An old silk, of a colour now unrecognisable, clung to her figure. The creases where it had been folded were worn nearly through, and the edges of the skirt were clotted and discoloured with mud.

"In what manner was your father hurt?" I asked.

"He blew himself up, sir, and is terribly wounded."

In the extract, how does the writer use language and structure to describe the arrival of the woman?

Support your views with reference to the text.

(6)

The writer presents the arrival of the woman as mysterious. The woman slipped in like a ghost into the house. The writer employs a simile, which tells the reader how she quickly came in the house without saying a word without any knowledge of her intent. Furthermore, the noun 'ghost' reiterates this idea of mystery, as it once again shows her to be silent and leaves the poor doctor confused on her arrival. Additionally, the doctor could 'discern

nothing beyond a pale, thin face and large eyes. The writer employs a tricolon in the form of a list, adding more mystery to her intent as all he could use was her facial features to understand anything about the woman.

The writer presents the arrival of the woman as rushed. This was caused by the doctor as he 'said hastily' for the woman to come in. Here, an adverb is used to get the woman to come in quickly to avoid the wind which was rapidly forcing an entrance. The personification of the wind forced the ~~doctor~~ woman to come into the house so suddenly and make her arrival seem rushed.

This is a wide-ranging response, which covers aspects of language (simile, noun, adverb and personification) and structure (tricolon/list). Relevant subject terminology has been used throughout and relevant examples have been selected from the extract. A mark at the bottom of Level 5 is appropriate because the analysis could have been developed further.

Level 3, 5 marks

Learners should avoid purely technique spotting and should consider the effects created.

3 Read this extract.

"Come in, come in, my good woman," I said hastily, for the wind seemed to catch eagerly at the opportunity of making itself at home in my hall, and was rapidly forcing an entrance through the half-open door.

She slipped in ^{like a ghost}, and I closed the door. While I was striking a light, I could hear her teeth still clicking in the dark hall, ^{as if some skeleton was chattering}. I begged her to enter the room and asked her what her business was.

"My father has met with a severe accident," she said, "and requires instant surgical aid. I entreat you to come immediately."

The freshness and the melody of her voice startled me. I looked at her attentively, but, owing to a shawl in which her head was wrapped, I could discern nothing beyond a ^{faded} pale, ^{faded} thin face and large eyes. Her dress was lamentable.*** An old silk, of a colour now unrecognisable, clung to her figure. The creases where it had been folded were worn nearly through, and the edges of the skirt were clotted and discoloured with mud.

"In what manner was your father hurt?" I asked.

"He blew himself up, sir, and is terribly wounded."

In the extract, how does the writer use language and structure to describe the arrival of the woman?

Support your views with reference to the text.

(6)

O'Brien uses language and structure to describe the arrival of the woman as startling and obscure. This can be clearly seen when it says "she slipped in like a ghost... as if some skeleton was chattering". The use of the simile of "as a ghost", emphasises her lightness upon entrance as she is making no apparent noise. Additionally, the auditory imagery in "I could hear her teeth clicking", highlights how cold & cold she is, and this could create sympathy for the reader. Furthermore, the use of the long complex sentence tells the reader that the man in the house is confused and bewildered on why her appearance

i) So frail as he is narrating everything, using multiple clauses. Finally, the use of the wordtypes of "Skeleton" (noun) and "chattering" (verb) can elucidate to the reader her loss of humanity after her father failed experiment matches with the pathetic fallacy of the Cold atmosphere. This is due to the fact that a skeleton only emerges after a person's death and her being compared to one can show the psychological effects that she is facing. Therefore O'Brien uses language and structural techniques to describe the arrival of the woman as startling and obscure.

O'Brien uses language and structure to describe the arrival of the woman as pitiful. The poem in the first poem perspective describes her as "beyond a pale, thin face... dress was lamentable." The use of the triadic listing of adjectives highlights the quantity of her lack of humanitarian appearance, creating an image of a ghost through the use of visual images in the reader's head. Furthermore the short sentence, creates a sort of blunt tone and the adjective "lamentable" means deplorable and distressing so this creates an effect of pity and empathy from the reader's hearts. Also, the woman says that "he blew himself up sir, and is terribly wounded" the nature of using the word "sir" when describing such an emotionally traumatic description makes the reader again pitiful as he is showing respect even when something so horrific happened.

(Total for Question 3 = 6 marks)

This is a strong response right from the start with the learner combining substantiated points about the use of a simile, auditory imagery and long complex sentence with multiple clauses. The learner goes on to consider the first-person perspective and triadic listing. The points made are convincing and show a clear understanding of how the arrival of the woman is described.

This learner provides sufficient analysis of the techniques used for this six-mark question and there is a strong focus on the effects created. The response is discriminating in its selection of textual references and achieves full marks.

Level 3, 6 marks

This learner has achieved full marks by using the space provided. There is no need for learners to use additional paper to be able to achieve 6 marks.

Question 4

Question 4

Question four is the highest mark tariff question in Section A and learners would be wise to ensure that they allocate sufficient time to this question.

This question tests learners' ability to evaluate texts critically and support their evaluations with appropriate textual references. The focus of evaluation is upon how well something has been achieved, not merely upon how it has been achieved; it is an assessment of the relative success of the writer rather than simply an explanation of the techniques that have been used. It is true that in order to offer a meaningful evaluation one must be able to show a well-informed understanding of the text and be able to support this with close reference to the text.

The focus of this question in the summer 2026 paper was upon how successfully the writer attempts to create a dramatic atmosphere. Once again, learners must focus upon the question asked if they are to be successful.

The more successful answers offered wide-ranging evaluations that were closely focused upon the Assessment Objective and which used apt text selection to support the points being made. The most successful responses considered the extract in its entirety. The quality of evaluative language was a good discriminator, as was the focus on the question. The mark scheme for this question indicates that 'References to writer's techniques should only be credited at Level 2 and above if they support the critical judgement of the text.' As was the case in previous series, it was pleasing to see that, in the main, responses this series had attempted to be evaluative and that learners had been encouraged to use evaluative language, even just at the level of 'successful' or 'effective'. As has been the case in previous series, less successful responses tended to be narrative-based and sometimes concentrated entirely upon a small part of the text (often the part of the extract used in question 3), showing only a partial understanding of the text, which limited their ability to evaluate how successfully the writer had achieved those effects. Such answers were often brief and undeveloped and often misunderstood the events of the extract. Learners should also be reminded to support their ideas with relevant examples from the text.

It is also important to note that the mark scheme states: 'References to the writer's techniques should only be credited at Level 2 and above if they support the critical judgement of the text.' This is an AO4 question and, therefore, purely AO2 responses cannot be credited above Level 2.

The mark scheme sets out a range of possible points learners could make. However, it is important to remember that this is indicative content and all relevant points made by learners are rewarded.

Popular points included:

- how the arrival of the woman, in such foul weather, begins to build a dramatic atmosphere
- the personification of the wind as an unwelcome presence, forcing itself into the house, creating a simple sense of danger or jeopardy
- how the identity of the woman is never revealed, and this mystery is enhanced by the manner in which she is described: 'I caught but a dim glimpse of her' and 'She slipped in like a ghost'

- how the semantic field of death creates a dramatic and ghoulish atmosphere: 'ghost' and 'skeleton'
- the heightened sense of drama as the reader learns that the chemist will not leave the laboratory and is highly secretive
- the use of a short, alliterative imprecation, with exclamation mark, creates a real sense of drama about the severity of the chemist's injuries: "'Good God!'"
- how the man's strange reactions and primal energy creates a dramatic conclusion to the extract. The writer uses a simile to compare him to 'a wild animal'.

There was much evidence of the use of the acronym 'SITE' (setting, ideas, themes and events) or similar, which tended to help learners to think of relevant points in the text to evaluate.

Many learners focused on moments or incidents within the text which evoked a sense of drama or mystery. These included the weather (mention of 'pathetic fallacy' was fairly common); the appearance of the woman and her entry into the house (with much focus on the semantic field of death and gothic tropes); the dramatic impact of powerful phrases ('he blew himself up', for example); the ambivalent qualities of the woman; the dark, shabby, cluttered house; the startling appearance of 'the victim of chemistry' and his 'expression of fury and terror'.

The most successful responses were those which acknowledged from the start that the passage was a literary construct and that the writer was making deliberate choices throughout. This often led to consideration of how the narrator was presented throughout the entirety of the text (as irritable to begin with, then as an observer and, finally, as a concerned participant) and how information was withheld but gradually revealed through dialogue.

It was noticeable that the majority of learners were equipped with evaluative language, such as 'successfully' and 'effectively'. However, the most successful learners offered more in-depth judgements about the effectiveness by considering more precisely why specific choices and elements of the extract are particularly effective.

4 In this extract, the writer attempts to create a dramatic atmosphere.

Evaluate how successfully this is achieved.

Support your views with detailed reference to the text.

(15)

The writer successfully creates dramatic atmosphere through the quote "Who are you? You are a stranger. How dare you come into my private room to spy upon me?" shows their being dramatic because they know who ~~she~~ she is because ~~the~~ the writer shows them speaking ~~at~~ about different things.

This is a basic response that makes limited assertions. A long reference from the text has been selected. There is an attempt at description but there is some confusion. The response meets bullet points 2 and 3 of the mark scheme for 2 marks. Level 1, 2 marks

Learners should try to consider the text as a whole and not focus on one or two parts.

4 In this extract, the writer attempts to create a dramatic atmosphere.

Evaluate how successfully this is achieved.

Support your views with detailed reference to the text.

(15)

~~The writer shows dramatic atmospheres in this extract through the constant use of weather. This is shown at the beginning of the extract when the writer talks about a woman standing in "a hole deep in the snow" ~~in with this it passes to talk about the woman again we see this when said "I can't see a dim glimpse of her for the night was cloudy, but I could hear her teeth rattling"~~ This creates a cold and ~~dark~~ atmosphere, ~~when~~ as the text goes on it is perceived as ~~violent~~ through the use of ~~the~~ the wind saying how it "was ~~rapidly~~ rapidly forcing an entry" ~~through~~ Showing more about the weather ^{showing its} ~~showing~~ its aggressive so for creating us an aggressive atmosphere ~~that the~~ ~~weather and dramatically pronouncing the cold woman~~ ~~but partly showing dramatic and a bit of dramatic affect via the wind~~~~

In this extract the writer presents a dramatic atmosphere through the consistent use of weather. This is shown mostly through the talk of wind with we can see when the writer quotes the wind as "Rapidly forcing an entry" with this the reader tells us the ~~am~~ wind is violent this is joint to the atmosphere and ~~gives~~ gives a dramatic use to it.

Also in this text the atmosphere repeating resembles cold taking us to the beginning of this extract stating "A woman was standing ankle deep in the snow that lay upon the step. I could not get a glimpse of her, for the night was cloudy" ~~here~~ in this quotation we ~~see~~ learn it is snowing bad out there and the girl can't stop chattering said further into the extract but we also catch the words "for the night was cloudy" giving the atmosphere a gloomy dimmer within.

This leaves the extract to dramatic aspects to cold, dark and gloomy.

This response fulfils the descriptors for Level 2. The learner focuses on the weather. There is comment on the ideas in the text, straightforward opinions (linked to dramatic effects created) and the selection of references is valid.
Level 2, 6 marks

Using the SITE approach, looking at setting, ideas, themes and events, can help learners to think of ideas to write about.

4 In this extract, the writer attempts to create a dramatic atmosphere.

Evaluate how successfully this is achieved.

PEE

Support your views with detailed reference to the text.

(15)

Overall, I think the writer has successfully created a dramatic atmosphere.

The very first sentence of the text says "I had just retired to rest when the ~~door~~ night bell pulled violently". The ~~a~~ doorbell being described as violent ~~&~~ makes the atmosphere seem dramatic because 'violent' is such a strong word and it could alert the reader that something is wrong right away.

The writer ~~on the~~ successfully attempts to create a dramatic atmosphere through describing the weather ~~and the setting~~. The quote "the wind seemed to catch ~~rapidly~~ eagerly at the opportunity of [...] rapidly forcing an entrance through the half-open door" is ~~showing the wind~~ describing the wind as being strong and invasive, and this could create a dramatic atmosphere because ~~things~~ strong and invasive things can also be quite quick, and quick things ~~are usually~~ usually startle or scare people, leading to a dramatic atmosphere.

The writer also makes a point of saying that this text was set at night, and this can create a dramatic atmosphere because, night time means darkness and darkness means mystery, leading back to ~~the~~ the dramatic atmosphere. The quote "I had just retired to rest" ^{when the night bell was rung violently} tells the reader that it is nighttime, and night time is a time when things are supposed to ~~slow down~~ & quieten down and stop, so the immediate use of the word "violent" is a dramatic contrast, and therefore leads to a dramatic atmosphere.

This response focuses on the question from the outset: 'I think the writer has successfully created a dramatic atmosphere'. The dramatic atmosphere is explained as the response progresses and it is this focus upon explanation rather than moving to analysis that suggests that this answer is in Level 3.

There is some informed judgement about the text but as this is not consistent throughout the response the mark is kept from the top of the level.

Level 3, 8 marks

Look again at this answer and see if you can recognise how it moves from simply commenting to explaining.

If you can do that, it will help you understand how to climb the ladder of marks in the mark scheme.

4 In this extract, the writer attempts to create a dramatic atmosphere.

Evaluate how successfully this is achieved.

Support your views with detailed reference to the text.

S P E C S
u n d e r
f e e l
i n
t h e
(15)

Fitz-James O'Brien successfully creates a dramatic atmosphere throughout the extract, specifically by making the first impression to the reader already be filled with tension based in the setting. O'Brien sets the extract in a cold, dark atmosphere: "It was winter", "midnight" and "unkle deep in the snow", the use of setting the scene in a cold, dark environment already makes everything feel dramatic, as this weather contributes to danger and the feeling of being scared. Furthermore, the setting foreshadows the later events, showing how O'Brien purposefully sets up the reader with a feeling of "What could happen next?",

Our first impressions of the people in the extract also help to build a dramatic atmosphere. Our first impression of the doctor makes us feel sympathy but also intrigue. The line "I grumbled as I rose" the use of the word ~~grumbled~~ grumbled purposefully gives us an idea that he is not too happy, and is annoyed at being woken up, giving us an idea that his character is one that perhaps is agitated easily. Our first impression of the woman is she is in distress, and is quite

Ann and Small baseel left and her appearance is described. The line "She slipped in like a ghost" shows us she's light on her feet, creatively alluding to her injury situation that maybe she is poor, that's why she's so thin. This makes us readers feel guilt but also feel courage for her, as she's on a long way to see the doctor. And the first impression of the dad is one that creates irony, as the woman describes him as a chemist, yet he blew himself up. This adds humour, but also a sense of fear, as ~~we~~ we realise what him to be okay. This successfully creates a dramatic atmosphere, as the characters are described in quite obscure ways.

The use of setting the story from the first person perspective of the doctor makes the story dramatic, as it is from one person's view. This makes the extract give the reader questions essentially, as we don't know what's going on, nor does the doctor. This connects us readers to the story more, but specifically connects us to the doctor. This is very effective for this ~~situation~~ situation in particular and ~~draws~~ draws us in to the unknown and further builds a dramatic atmosphere.

As much as the extract is dramatic, a sense of

fear is also implemented throughout, building tension. O'Brien uses a semantic field of words that connote to death or danger: 'ghost', 'wounded', 'deaf', 'victim' and 'terror'. This use of language effectively builds drama, but we fear what's going to happen the most. This theme of danger makes the situation seem more ~~danger~~ than it actually is, creating suspense and almost excitement as to what's going on.

This response is very focused on the question asked. The dramatic atmosphere of the whole of the text is analysed throughout. All references are appropriate and support the points made.

This response fulfils bullet points 1 and 3 of the mark scheme. Further evidence of well-informed and developed critical judgement could have been benefitted the response and it is this that holds the response back from achieving a mark at the top of Level 4.

Level 4, 11 marks

The focus of this question is AO4. Learners should offer evaluative judgement of the text. The focus of evaluation is upon how well something has been achieved, not merely upon how it has been achieved.

- 4 In this extract, the writer attempts to create a dramatic atmosphere. ^{how well does the writer create a dramatic atmosphere?}
Evaluate how successfully this is achieved. ^{carefully clearly}
Support your views with detailed reference to the text. <sup>S
I
T
E</sup> (15)

Firstly, the writer clearly utilises the setting of the extract to ~~create~~ craft a dramatic atmosphere. The weather is very cold and windy which implies ferocity and danger, "ankle deep in the snow", "rapidly forcing an entrance through the half-open door." The writer utilises pathetic fallacy to craft a dramatic atmosphere by deliberately emphasizing the intensity ^{of the weather}. The snow is "ankle deep" which shows how it hasn't just lightly snowed, the snow has been consistent and heavy which could lead to accidents or hypothermia, like the woman who is "so cold" her teeth [rattled] like castanets. Reinforcing the danger of the weather, the wind is also used to create a dramatic atmosphere as it is also presented as danger or enemy. The wind is purposefully trying to intrude into the doctors home which personifies the wind as aggressive and violent, which effectively helps to contribute to the dramatic atmosphere as the weather helps to create a sense of danger.

The writer then goes on to utilise the wider theme of the gothic description of the woman to

effectively create a dramatic atmosphere. The woman ~~is~~ "slipped in like a ghost", "some skeleton was chattering", "pale face, ~~this~~, thin face and large eyes.", "her dress was lamentable." The writer is deliberately building up the description of the woman throughout the extract as vulnerable, weak and desperate to intensify the dramatic atmosphere as the woman needs help immediately from the doctor, "requires instant surgical aid." The semantic field of the supernatural is also used to reinforce this idea as it implies something otherworldly and inhuman.

The writer successfully ~~utilises~~ ^{uses} the ~~fact~~ ^{accident} of the woman's father's ~~incident~~ to create a dramatic atmosphere. The incident is presented as both shocking and secretive to maintain fear and intrigue for the reader, "He blew himself up, sir, and is terribly wounded", "he is a chemist" and "He will ~~not~~ allow no one but myself to enter his laboratory." Whilst the woman is purposefully blunt when explaining what happened to her father, she ~~always~~ ^{also} introduces the wider theme of secrecy by exposing to Doctor Luxon her father's wish to remain by himself, allowing no one to enter but

the woman even though he is mortally injured. Her father's dismissiveness ~~and~~ ~~and~~ for anyone to enter cleverly increases the dramatic atmosphere as readers are consoled, intimidated yet intrigued by the father's actions.

The writer then continues to utilise the setting of the home to increase the dramatic atmosphere. The home is "lit by a single lamp", "dilapidated" with ~~"chemical instruments littered~~ ~~conspicuously~~ ~~placed in various corners"~~ the house is presented as dark, which often intensifies drama for readers as the dark often links to, secrets, death and fear whilst also being presented as being run down. This often links to ^{an} abandoned, isolated place however the writer has deliberately crafted the house to be dark and dilapidated to increase readers fear and to craft an even more dramatic atmosphere as they fear not only the house itself but what is awaiting inside of it.

Finally, the writer utilises the event of Doctor Luxor entering the father's room ^{to craft a dramatic atmosphere.} The doctor is immediately questioned and threatened by the father which creates an intimidating atmosphere as the ^{Luxor} doctor may be in danger, "who are you? You are a stranger." However after the father

~~about~~ Doctor Luxor clarifies who he is the writer powerfully reintroduces the idea of secrecy, "you are bound by oath ~~to~~ not to reveal the secrets of your patients." The father's insistence that Doctor Luxor keeps their interaction and what is about to occur a secret is incredibly powerful at creating a dramatic atmosphere as readers are more than intrigued and interested by the father's cryptic reveals of information and will undoubtedly feel not only frightened by what is to be revealed but also waiting in suspense.

This is an accomplished response. The learner demonstrates the ability to take a step back from the extract and to look at the text as a whole. There is convincing use of evaluative language to track the writer's crafting of the piece: 'deliberately', 'purposefully' and 'incredibly powerful'. The learner focuses points on ideas, events, themes and setting (in accordance with bullet point 1 of the mark scheme).

Amongst other points, there is consideration of the setting, the description of the woman, the man's accident and the description of the man's home.

The response is fully focussed on the task and convincingly substantiated with discriminating references. It is a full-mark response.

Level 5, 15 marks

Reading answers such as this one that have been successful can help learners to recognise the features of a high-scoring answer so they are in a better position to be able to replicate this approach in their own writing.

Question 5

Section B

The writing question is the final section of the paper. Learners are advised to spend about 45 minutes on their writing and there are 40 marks available on both papers. Considered in relation to the overall percentage of the marks available on the papers, this is significant. Examiners are always impressed by learners' writing, and by the development they are able to achieve in the time they have, their individual style and level of thought and creativity. In an examination situation, learners do incredibly well to produce a response to an unseen question.

The specification entitles the Paper 1 writing section 'Imaginative Writing', and it is important that all learners understand what they are being asked to do. There is no set text type for Section B; learners are expected to produce clear and coherent text and to write for impact. Each question tells learners that their work will be marked for the accurate and appropriate use of vocabulary, spelling, punctuation and grammar.

The question is marked against two assessment objectives and does not include a separate mark for 'SPAG'. As a reminder, the two assessment objectives are:

A05:

Communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively, selecting and adapting tone, style and register for different forms, purposes and audiences (Q5 and Q6)

Organise information and ideas, using structural and grammatical features to support coherence and cohesion of texts (Q5 and Q6)

A06:

Learners must use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation (Q5 and Q6)

A05 assesses how well learners can communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively, selecting and adapting tone, style and register for different forms, purposes and audiences; and, in addition, how well they organise information and ideas, using structural and grammatical features to support coherence and cohesion. A05 is worth 24 of the 40 marks available.

A06 accounts for the remaining 16 marks and assesses how well learners use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation.

Learners must choose one of the two questions available to them.

The questions in the November 2025 paper were:

Q5:

Write about a time when you, or someone you know, did something to help another person.

Q6:

Look at the images provided.

Write about a time when something exciting happened at night.

There is a deliberate and thematic link to the text that has been read for Section A and this is intended to encourage and support learners in their writing. One of the questions will always make reference to a pair of printed images (in the summer 2026 series, this was question 6 - as per the question above).

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In the summer 2026 series, the two writing questions were equally popular with learners. Most learners were able to complete a piece of writing in the available time. For those who had not left sufficient time for the writing, they should be aware that the mark scheme makes specific reference to structural and grammatical features to support coherence and cohesion and, therefore, incomplete texts will not be able to access the full range of marks available for this question. However, learners are not expected to write a full novel and often responses that focus on a moment or episode are more successful than those responses that try to cover a series of events over a period of time.

The paper includes a section for learners to plan their answers and they are recommended to do so. As has been the case in previous series, when learners did make use of the planning box this series, it tended to be used effectively.

Learners interpreted the two questions in a wide range of ways. Responses to question 5 included pieces relating to help given in a challenging situation, helping a friend or self-support through a difficult time. For question 6, topics included camping trips, description of the night sky (such as a meteor shower or the Northern Lights) and attending a festival.

As has been the case in previous series, the most successful responses crafted a response that used a wide variety of techniques, had emotional depth, accessible characters as well as selective detail to build character and setting. These responses had a defined narrative structure and controlled pacing, with paragraphing used purposefully. There was some particularly effective description evident in responses to question 6, with appropriately developed detail to build the scene.

The less successful answers were often incomplete, lacking in clarity of communication and sometimes assuming an understanding of character or setting that was not shared with the reader, making it difficult to fully engage with what was written. The responses awarded marks in the lower levels were also not clearly linked to the question, often with a tacked-on reference at the end of the response to the idea of helping. Literal recounts were also evident in the lower levels of the mark scheme.

It is important for learners to remember that a full short story or novel is not expected to be written in 45 minutes. Often with imaginative writing, learners spend a lot of time creating an environment in a piece and this affects their ability to organise and structure their response (the second bullet of the mark scheme for AO5). There should be clear organisation and structure with an introduction, development of points and a conclusion. A learner may attempt an ambitious opening to their writing, but this is then lost as they realise that the narrative needs to get somewhere very quickly as their time runs out. The point about Level 3, bullet three - 'Develops and connects ideas and information' - is important; the extent to which ideas are developed can be a discriminator as to how far into the level an answer can get. Ideas at the lower end of this level are connected, but not fully developed, and at the higher end of the level are both connected and developed. Examiners noted this series that some over-long plots lost control as they progressed. There were also some dialogue-heavy responses, which lacked narrative focus. The most successful responses had clearly planned the shape and ending of the answer, with devices integrated throughout rather than as add-ons (possibly following a checklist). There were also some intriguing responses that used motifs meaningfully throughout. For AO6, it is important to remember that it is not just about SPAG (spelling, punctuation and grammar) - assessment is of the learner's ability to 'use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and

punctuation'. AO6 takes quality of vocabulary and syntax into account as well as spelling and punctuation.

Learners should be encouraged to read and understand a range of texts in their preparation for the examination to extend their own vocabulary – think, how can they use extensive vocabulary strategically? Learners are credited if they are ambitious in their vocabulary selection – it may not always be spelt correctly, but is credited as ambitious, whereas less ambitious vocabulary may be spelt correctly all the way through – this is where 'best-fit' is important in recognising the learner's achievement. Strategic use of vocabulary in Level 5 is seen where learners really consider their reader and their message in the choice of language. Examiners did note evidence of malapropisms this series when learners were attempting ambitious but learners should be commended for thinking about their vocabulary. Further practice of using vocabulary in different contexts could help learners.

Learners often worry about how to show they are using a range of punctuation. They should consider using punctuation accurately (that they understand) and, if possible, using varied punctuation. Varied punctuation could be parenthesis, ellipsis, semi-colons and colons, speech marks as examples. Syntax should be used to create an impact on the reader – learners again should go back to their answers to Question 3 and should consider all the points they raise about language and structure in the text they have read. They should be ambitious, for example including coordination and subordination, short sentences, questions, exclamations and commands amongst other syntactical structures.

However, learners should not lose sight of standard conventions, including capital letters and full stops. It was noticeable this series, as has been the case in previous series, that a number of learners did not always include these in their writing. Other common pitfalls this series included inconsistent use of tense, repetitive sentence forms and comma splicing. Learners are advised to save some time at the end to proof read their work.

The most successful responses for AO6 varied sentences deliberately for effect, used precise and wide-ranging vocabulary and used a range of punctuation accurately. There was also evidence of learners' proof reading their responses, with self-correction evident.

Plan your answer to Section B here:

I'm gonna write about This Time I saved a baby bird that had fallen out a Tree when I was 7

Write your answer to Section B here:

I was playing outside with my friends when I was like 7 and I saw this thing on the floor and it was some type of baby animal and I told my mom about it and she called rspca and it turned out to be a baby bird.

I also helped with getting this person thing from the top shelf at a shop because they couldn't reach it themselves.

and picked up this thing this baby dropped, because his mum couldn't see he ~~dropped~~ dropped it.

AO5: There is limited evidence of an ability to communicate clearly in this response. This is a basic response, with purpose not fully established. The learner has briefly considered three examples of helping someone. Further development of ideas would be required for a mark in Level 2.

AO6: There is limited ability to write for clarity, purpose and effect demonstrated in the response. Basic vocabulary is used and punctuation is used with basic control. There is some inconsistency with the use of capital letters. There are some misspellings and lapses in the control of sentences but on balance there is sufficient evidence for a mark at the top of Level 1.

AO5: Level 1, 4 marks

AO6: Level 1, 4 marks

Look again at the AO5 criteria.

The first bullet point assesses the learner's ability to communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively. The second bullet considers the suitability of the response for audience and purpose, along with the tone, style and register. The final bullet assesses the use of structural and grammatical features.

Write your answer to Section B here:

Once me and my friend lets call her ^{Elle} ~~ete~~ went to church together. Me, Elle, and my Mom. I normally go every Sunday but this is Elle's first time. At 10.00 am we had breakfast at the church and we was sat with my mum, old friend ^{Susan} ~~Susan~~ and my Nan.

My Mum and Nan went to go and help out with something very important so it was just me, Elle, Susan. We was all eating these lovely cakes someone donated to the church but then all of a sudden Susan fainted...

Me and Elle didnt know what to do so the
only only thing we could think of is putting her
in the recovery position while another man was
calling an ambulance. & He The ambulance came
but Susan had no one to go with her so me
and Elle had to, it waunt nice seeing Susan in this
condition no one knew what caused it.

We are at the hospital in the waiting room while
Susan is getting loads of tests done to her. The doctor
comes out and says she didnt make it, she
had an allergic reaction to the cake you said
she had earlier. Me and Elle are sat in disbelief this
all happend in the space of half an hour. My mum
and nan both come running to me and asked what happened

AO5: The response fulfils the descriptors for Level 2. Some ability to communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively is demonstrated in the response. There is an awareness of audience and purpose, such as the use of the ellipsis at the end of the second paragraph. There is a straightforward style and suitable development of ideas for a mark at the top of Level 2.

AO6: The response demonstrates some ability to write for clarity, purpose and effect for Level 2. There are some basic spelling inaccuracies throughout the response but some more complex words have been spelt correctly, including 'ambulance'. There is evidence of punctuation used with control, including full stops and ellipsis. However, there is inconsistent use of apostrophes. On balance, a mark at the top of Level 2 is appropriate.

AO5: Level 2, 9 marks

AO6: Level 2, 7 marks

The role of characters should be considered carefully when writing. In a short piece of writing, it is advisable not to introduce too many characters, as it is difficult to bring them to life and to make them distinct.

Plan your answer to Section B here:

watch → safety of friend
↳ safety from ~~the fear of~~ death
storm = war

Write your answer to Section B here:

The chthonic and ~~terrestrious~~
tempestuous storm loomed over
the city. As the ~~dark~~ ebony
clouds tumbled and crackled
- as if with a malicious intent -
I began to tremble. I then
reached for my watch, but then
the ~~tempest~~ grey facade of the
sky struck the ground with
bolts of fire.

And just like that, I was there again.

~~The~~ Explosions erupted from the ground ~~like this~~ as if the Earth began to crack. The tumultuous ~~one~~ arena of death had soldiers and brothers drop ~~to~~ instantaneously. ~~As I began to drown in mud and get buried by the rubble~~ As I clenched and grasped my rifle ~~at~~, I ~~was~~ began to drown in mud and get buried alive by the rubble. I couldn't move, but I didn't want to. ~~The~~ As I started to ~~see~~ watch my hope fade, I felt a comforting hand rest on my shoulder and I heard a guiding voice say "Don't worry, I'm going to get you out of here". It was my best friend Peter. ~~He~~ And so he heaved and pulled me out of my ~~grave~~ acrid grave and threw me on top of his shoulders. ~~He~~ He took me far away ~~away~~ from the battlefield where the putrid

bodies of my friends ~~rest~~ layed.

Eventually he placed ~~by~~ me down and now the ^{harmonious} ~~1st~~ symphony of artillery and guns and explosions ~~is~~ was faint. I began to feel my body rest and intense. Peter looked at me in the eyes and said "Here, have this", he gave me his watch, ~~you~~ "You're safe now". ~~He~~ He took his rifle and ~~he~~ began to walk away. "Where are you going?", I exclaimed, "Don't worry, now I have something I have to come back for", we chuckled. ~~As~~ As I watched him run back to the calamity of war ~~he~~ I held his watch, hoping that he would come back for it... ~~and~~ and me. Hours passed and eventually I saw someone kneel down to me, ~~He said "Peter saved"~~ but it wasn't Peter. The man said "Peter saved many of our men ~~he~~ today, we're eternally grateful for his service". Tears rose to my eyes.

and streamed down my face.
~~All I had to do~~ I squeezed his
watch as I mourned, ~~and~~ and I
could feel the comfort of his
presence.

Now that this storm opposes
me, as death did that day, I
~~still~~ grow stronger and calmer
as I hold his watch that keeps
me safe from death's ~~hand~~ grasp.

AO5: This is a mid-Level 4 response. A secure ability to communicate clearly and effectively is demonstrated throughout the response. Material has been organised for effect, such as how the atmosphere is created at the start of the response. Further evidence of paragraphing could have benefitted the response and there are slips in effectiveness at times. Nevertheless, on balance, a mark in the middle of Level 4 is appropriate.

AO6: There is evidence of a secure ability to write for clarity, purpose and effect throughout the response. Wide, selective vocabulary has been used, such as 'tempestuous', 'malicious' and 'facade'. Sentences are controlled but further evidence of a range of sentences for deliberate effect could have benefitted the response. Nevertheless, the descriptors for Level 4 have been met in full.

AO5: Level 4, 17 marks

AO6: Level 4, 13 marks

Learners should try to save some time at the end to proofread their response.

Question 6

Plan your answer to Section B here:

Punc	Lang
:	Metaphor
,	Similie
-	Pathetic F
()	Personification
...	Imagery
?	
.	

Write your answer to Section B here:

~~March 22nd, 1922. The night my life
took a turn for the flipped upside down...
locking eyes with the one I knew I wanted
an angel like woman that ^{had me feeling} ~~was~~ my
savior like ~~God~~ & cupid had just
shot me with one of his arrows of love.
The end~~

July 22nd, 2022. The night my life flipped upside down...

Locking eyes with an angel like lady had me feeling like cupid had just shot me with an arrow of love.

It was a suprisingly warm evening, ~~not long~~ ~~standing, maybe just the new~~ not a single cloud in the night ^{sight} sky. stars sparkling stars filled the sky. A sea of sparkling stars filled the sky. ~~which filled the wrapped her~~ filled the sky, while the trees danced in the breeze. It was just perfect. I approached

I approached her and we began ^{talking} ~~talking~~ to love, I was caught off guard by the melody of her gentle, raspy voice. tickling my ears. we had decided to sit under ~~the~~ a willow tree. ~~then~~ It's a tall body, ~~and~~ long arms and hair ~~acted as~~ was the perfect shield from reality and we got on ~~as~~ like to a house ~~on~~ on fire.

she was the missing piece of the puzzle;
her hair, silky like the finest dress; her
eyes, blue as the ocean; her scent, caramel
and delicious. I was in love.

she instantly broke down the walls built
by previous sorrow, we transferred numbers,
made plans on our second date and made
~~an~~ a un-breakable connection.

"BEE BEE BEE BEE" it came...

That was the best night of my life.

AO5: Communication is clear in this response. There is evidence of material selected to suit the purpose, such as the date and ellipsis at the start of the response to set the scene: 'July 22nd, 2022. The night my life flipped upside down...'. There are appropriate descriptive elements and evidence of selective paragraphing. Further evidence of devices to engage the audience and development of ideas could have benefitted the response but a mark in the middle of Level 3 is appropriate.

AO6: There is evidence of varied vocabulary in this response, but the control of sentences is not always secure. There is evidence of punctuation used with control, particularly full stops, but there could be more wide-ranging use of punctuation in the response. On balance, there is sufficient evidence of sound ability to write for clarity, purpose and effect for a mark in the middle of Level 3.

AO5: Level 3, 12 marks

AO6: Level 3, 9 marks

Look again at the AO6 criteria.

The first bullet point addresses the extent to which the ability to write for clarity, purpose and effect is demonstrated in the response. The second bullet point rewards the use of vocabulary and the third bullet points credits the use of punctuation and sentence structures.

Plan your answer to Section B here:

- at home - fire in back yard (exciting)
- fire = uncontrolled and travels to house
- fire story
- volta of bonfire night (exciting)
- inferno dies out
- fade to black w/ night setting
- Columns of smoke escape macabre blaze
I cannot

Write your answer to Section B here:

The serene warmth of the fire pit bathed my figure as I basked in its calming grasp. I sat staring above at the midnight eclipse and the constellations of the Gods as slowly I drifted in and out of consciousness.

Yet suddenly I ~~was~~ ^{was} awoken as frigid blasts of midnight air strike my face as I bolt up cautiously and gaze at a trail of destructive bronze embers creeping closer and closer to my

home as it finds its way up the mahogany porch and along the cobbled bricks until finally.....

A bright burst of light caught my attention as the flame broke through the window and intruded my home.

Yet it still raged on.

Brilliant spears of amber flame danced wildly across the shadows, painting the once maroon bricks of my home into charred, black blocks of torture.

As if to mock me, the crimson warriors continued to wreak havoc on what I once called home and my one true peace of mind in this world.

Yet it still raged on.

I fixed my view upon the door which stood ~~for~~ amongst ~~B~~ the bloody wreckage as it held its place defiantly and proudly, unwilling to succumb to the infernoes prowess. The intricate designs

of its dark complexion began to fill ~~with~~ with ash and smoke as even the flame became too strong, fueled by the ambition of destruction and control. The brass handle began to glow a faint, soft orange glow, becoming too hot to open into the firepit of my home.

Yet it still raged on.

I could only stare. I could only watch. I could only gaze in beautiful terror as I watched my home become engulfed with an ashen tornado of flame. Slowly, the roof began to fall into itself, its frame failing and threatening to dive into the ~~baptism~~ baptism of fire below and vanish ~~into~~ into the furthest pits of hell.

Yet it still raged on.

As I sat in amazement, admittedly all I could think of was the astonishing resemblance to bonfire night as I remembered a time many years ago

when I would unite with friends and family alike and watch as amber dancers would paint a story through wooden tributes.

I only thought of it fondly throughout the years as I hear whispers of ^{excitement} joyful laughter whereas all I can hear now is the crackling and battling of the blaze ahead.

Slowly it began to fade.

Just as briskly as it started, as the inferno finally conquered my home and mental longevity; it began to die out into smokes and wisps of ashen tale of woe and victory.

Tall columns of smoke pillared towards the sky and away from the ~~wreckage~~ wreckage and escaping the macabre blaze I could not.

I traversed my way through the graveyard of life as I stared at all things ~~for~~ that passed on.

Love. Gifts. Memories...

I found my way to the living room where

sat upon a throne of ash and glory was
a single ember sat amongst the hearth,
glowing softly and calmly, unaware
of its tyranny and treacherous ability.

I stomped it out without a second
thought and watched as the world
embraced me in the pitiful closure
of the night and the pearlescence of
the full moon, guiding my next journey.

I exited the site and made my way
back to the firepit that ~~currently~~ Curiously,
continued to roar. Its serene warmth
bathed me in a wash of cold as I
~~was~~ sit reminded of my recklessness.
The stars and the constellations lie
oh so far away now - beckoning for
my touch.
Now I lie and await my fate.

Where do I go now?

What do I do?

I don't know

it's all pointless

AO5: This is a response worthy of full marks. This is a sophisticated response, which shapes the audience response with subtlety. A sophisticated style is sustained throughout. Structural and grammatical features have been used cohesively. The descriptors for Level 5 have been met in full. Given that learners have a guide time of 45 minutes to complete this task, no more can be expected. This is an example of a learner taking what could be quite a straightforward scenario and crafting it into a sophisticated response for GCSE level.

AO6: The response satisfies the descriptors for Level 5 in full. There is a sophisticated ability to write for clarity, purpose and effect demonstrated throughout the response. An extensive vocabulary has been used strategically, punctuation is used to aid emphasis, and a range of sentence structures used to achieve particular effects.

AO5: Level 5, 24 marks

AO6: Level 5, 16 marks

This writer clearly knew how the story was going to end before they started writing (as is evident from the plan) and this is part of what makes this such a successful piece of writing.

Before learners start to write, they should make sure they have a clear plan about how the response will start and how it will finish, which should produce writing that has shape and structure, as this one does.

Paper Summary

Paper Summary

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

- Remember that to do well in the Section A questions you should read the passage more than once before you start to answer the questions. At first, you will simply identify the main features of the text: what is happening, the main characters and the setting. On a second and third reading, you should start to identify the different ways in which the writer has tried to engage you as the reader and the techniques that have been used. These are what you will write about in your answers.
- Think about the structure of the text. Pay particular attention to the opening and closing of the text as these are important points for any writer and they will help you to see how the writer has shaped their text to initially gain the interest of the reader and then to leave them at a particular point.
- Remember that question 4 is worth more than the first three questions added together and twice as many marks as question 3. You should bear this in mind when considering how long you should spend on your answer, the level of detail to include and how much to write.
- When responding to question 4, try to remember that you are being asked to evaluate how successfully something has been done, not just to comment on the language and structural devices that the writer has used. This means that you should use evaluative language to show that this is what you are doing.
- Use evaluative language in question 4 to think about why the text is successful; give reasons for your view of how well the writer has achieved a particular effect.
- Before starting your own writing, take some time to use the planning box that is included. Plan the basic outline of your plot so that you know where you will start and how you will end your writing. If you have the time, you could identify key features of characters, important vocabulary or language techniques that you will include. Spending a few minutes to get your ideas in order will help you write in a more deliberate manner.
- If you are going to borrow any ideas from the Section A text or use any of its vocabulary, try to make sure that you make it your own by fully integrating it into your writing.
- Try to avoid clichés. Think carefully about your very first sentences. Try to write in a way that is imaginative and engaging for your reader from the very start. Use your own reading as stimulus, including the adoption of certain writers' techniques.
- Using your plan, think of your writing as a journey so that, as you begin to write, you will know what your destination is and where you will end. This will help you to write in a manner that is cohesive and coherent for your reader.
- Take care throughout with accuracy of all sorts: spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Keep a close eye on the time during the examination and use the number of marks available for each question as an indication of how long you should spend answering each question. Remember that Section A is worth 24 marks whilst Section B is worth 40 marks. Use the timing suggestions you are given on the front cover of the paper: 1 hour on Section A and 45 minutes on Section B.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link: <https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/results-certification/grade-boundaries.html>

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