



## GRADE 12 POETRY QUESTION BANK JUNE 2024

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- 1 Read the poem below and then answer the questions that follow.

**SONNET 130 – William Shakespeare**

1 My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;  
2 Coral is far more red, than her lips red:  
3 If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;  
4 If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.  
5 I have seen roses damasked, red and white,  
6 But no such roses see I in her cheeks;  
7 And in some perfumes is there more delight  
8 Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.  
9 I love to hear her speak, yet well I know  
10 That music hath a far more pleasing sound:  
11 I grant I never saw a goddess go,  
12 My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground:  
13 And yet by heaven, I think my love as rare,  
14 As any she belied with false compare.

- 1.1 The speaker mocks the manner in which women are presented in traditional love poetry.

Discuss the extent to which you agree with this statement with close reference to **imagery, tone** and **structure**.

Your response should take the form of a well-constructed essay of 250–300 words (about ONE page).

[10]

- 1.2.1. Refer to line 1: 'My mistress; eyes are nothing like the sun,'.

Identify and explain the figure of speech used in these lines.

(3)

- 1.2.2 Comment on the difference between perceived beauty and actual beauty, according to the speaker.

Refer to the poem as a whole in order to support your answer.

(3)

- 1.2.3 Discuss the importance of the words 'and yet' (line 13) in the context of the poem as a whole.

(2)

- 1.2.4 Identify and explain the mood in lines 13 and 14.

(2)  
[10]

- 1.3.1 In *Sonnet 130*, Shakespeare paints a realistic image of his beloved, instead of conforming to society's view of beauty. In doing so, he mocks the exaggerated clichés that were used at the time.

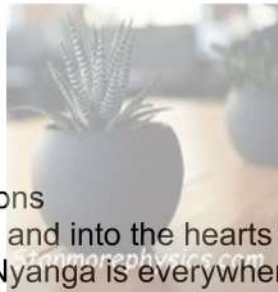
Critically discuss this statement with reference to **diction** and **imagery** used in the poem.

[10]

Your response should take the form of a well-constructed essay of 250–300 words (about ONE page).

- 2 Read the poem below and then answer the questions that follow.

**THE CHILD WHO WAS SHOT DEAD BY SOLDIERS AT NYANGA – Ingrid Jonker**

- 1 The child is not dead  
2 the child raises his fists against his mother  
3 who screams Africa screams the smell  
4 of freedom and heather  
5 in the locations of the heart under siege  
6 The child raises his fists against his father  
7 in the march of the generations  
8 who scream Africa scream the smell  
9 of justice and blood  
10 in the streets of his armed pride
- 11 The child is not dead  
12 neither at Langa nor at Nyanga  
13 nor at Orlando nor at Sharpeville  
14 nor at the police station in Philippi  
15 where he lies with a bullet in his head
- 16 The child is the shadow of the soldiers  
17 on guard with guns saracens and batons  
18 the child is present at all meetings and legislations  
19 the child peeps through the windows of houses and into the hearts of mothers  
20 the child who just wanted to play in the sun at Nyanga is everywhere  
21 the child who became a man treks through all of Africa  
22 the child who became a giant travels through the whole world
- 23 Without a pass
- 

- 2.1 The title of Jonker's poem creates the expectation of a dead child. However, the contents of the poem contradict the title.

Discuss the extent to which you agree with this statement with close reference to **diction, tone** and **imagery**.

Your response should take the form of a well-constructed essay of 250–300 words (about ONE page).

[10]

- 2.2.1 What is suggested by the phrase, 'the heart under siege' (line 5) in the context of the poem? (2)
- 2.2.2 Account for the repetition of the words 'the child' throughout the poem. (2)
- 2.2.3 Refer to lines 8–9: 'screams the smell ... justice and blood'. (3)

Comment on the effectiveness of the image in the context of the poem.

2.2.4 Critically discuss how the mood of the poem is expressed in line 23: '(without a pass)'. (3)  
[10]

2.3 The poem vividly portrays the anguish, deprivation and untapped possibilities within the pursuit of freedom.  
Critically discuss this statement with particular reference to the **imagery, diction** and **tone** used in the poem. [10]



3 Read the poem below and then answer the questions that follow.

**AT A FUNERAL – Dennis Brutus**

1 Black, green and gold at sunset: pageantry  
2 And stubbled graves: expectant, of eternity,  
3 In bride's-white, nun's-white veils the nurses gush their bounty  
4 Of red-wine cloaks, frothing the bugled dirging slopes  
5 Salute! then ponder all this hollow panoply  
6 For one whose gifts the mud devours, with our hopes.  
  
7 Oh all you frustrate ones, powers tombed in dirt,  
8 Aborted, not by Death but carrion books of birth  
9 Arise! The brassy shout of freedom stirs our earth;  
10 Not death but death's-head tyranny scythes our ground  
11 And plots our narrow cells of pain defeat and dearth:  
12 Better that we should die, than that we should lie down.

3.1 The poem vividly portrays anguish, deprivation, and untapped potential.

Discuss the extent to which you agree with this statement with close reference to **diction, tone and imagery**.

Your response should take the form of a well-constructed essay of 250–300 words (about ONE page).

[10]

3.2.1 Refer to lines 1–2: 'Black, green and ... Expectant, of eternity,'.

Explain what these lines suggest about the nature of the funeral.

(2)

3.2.2 Refer to line 4: 'frothing the bugled dirging slopes'.

Explain the reference to a bugle in the context of the poem.

(2)

3.2.3 Refer to lines 7–8: 'Oh all you ... books of birth'.

Comment on the effectiveness of this image in the context of the poem.

(3)

3.2.4 Refer to lines 10–12: 'Not death but ... should lie down.'

Critically discuss how the diction in these lines conveys the speaker's message about the regime in power.

(3)  
[10]



3.3.1 With reference to the poem as whole, discuss words/ phrases/ diction that suggest a political undertone. (2)

3.3.2 Refer to line 5: 'Salute! Then ponder ... this hollow panoply'.

Comment on the speaker's regard of the funeral. (2)

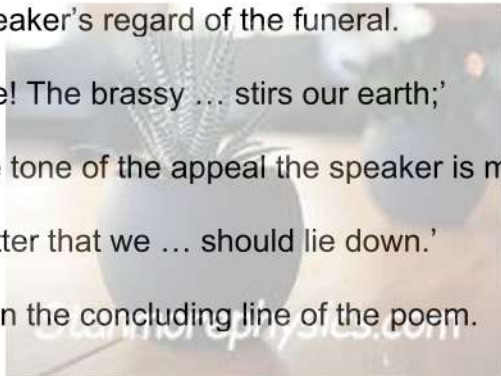
3.3.3 Refer to line 9: 'Arise! The brassy ... stirs our earth;'

Critically discuss the tone of the appeal the speaker is making. (3)

3.3.4 Refer to line 12: 'Better that we ... should lie down.'

Comment critically on the concluding line of the poem. (3)

**[10]**



4 Read the poem below and then answer the questions that follow.

**POEM OF RETURN – Jofre Rocha**

1 When I return from the land of exile and silence  
2 do not bring me flowers.  
3 Bring me rather all the dews,  
4 tears of dawns which witnessed dramas.  
5 Bring me the immense hunger for love  
6 and the plaint of tumid sexes in star-studded night.  
7 Bring me the long night of sleeplessness  
8 with mothers mourning, their arms bereft of sons.  
9 When I return from the land of exile and silence,  
10 no, do not bring me flowers ...  
11 Bring me only, just this  
12 the last wish of heroes fallen at day-break  
13 with a wingless stone in hand  
14 and a thread of anger snaking from their eyes.

4.1 In the poem 'Poem of Return', the speaker believes that the people who were not in exile suffered a great deal.

With reference to **diction**, **tone** and **imagery** discuss to what extent do you agree with the above statement.

Your response should be in the form of a well-constructed essay of 250-300 words (about ONE page).

[10]

4.2.1 Explain the use of the word, 'silent' (line 1) in the context of the poem. (2)

4.2.2 Account for the use of the ellipsis in line 10. (2)

4.2.3 Refer to lines 3–4: 'bring me rather ... which witnesses dramas.'

4.2.3.1. Identify the figure of speech in these lines. (1)

4.2.3.2 Comment on the effectiveness of this image. (2)

4.2.4 Refer to lines 11–14: 'Bring me only ... from their eyes.'

Critically discuss how the final stanza reinforces the central message of the poem.

(3)  
[10]

- 4.3.1 Refer to line 1: '... land of exile and silence'.  
Explain how the words 'exiled' and 'silence' influence your understanding of the speaker's situation. (2)
- 4.3.2 The words 'bring me' are repeated throughout the poem.  
Comment on the effectiveness of this repetition and what it conveys about the speaker's request. (2)
- 4.3.3 Refer to lines 7–8: 'Bring me the long night of sleeplessness / with mothers mourning, their arms bereft of sons.'  
Comment on how these lines highlight the experience of ordinary people. (3)
- 4.3.4 Refer to line 10: 'no, do not bring me flowers ...'  
Comment on what the use of the emphatic negative ('no, do not') reveals about the speaker's attitude (3)
- 4.4.1 Critically discuss the link between line 1 and the title of the poem. (2)
- 4.4.2 With reference to the poem as a whole comment on the use of anaphora. (2)
- 4.4.3 Refer to lines 3–4: 'Bring me rather ... which witnessed dramas.'  
Comment on the effectiveness of the sound device used in these lines. (3)
- 4.4.4 Refer to line 12: 'the last wish ... at day-break'.  
Comment critically on the final wish of the fallen heroes. (3)

[10]

[10]

5 Read the poem below and then answer the questions that follow.

**TALK TO THE PEACH TREE – Siphso Sepamla**

- 1 Let's talk to the swallows visiting us in summer  
2 ask how it is in other countries
- 3 Let's talk to the afternoon shadow  
4 ask how the day has been so far
- 5 Let's raise our pets to our level  
6 ask them what they don't know of us
- 7 words have lost meaning  
8 like all notations they've been misused
- 9 most people will admit  
10 a whining woman can overstate her case
- 11 Talk to the paralysing heat in the air  
12 inquire how long the mercilessness will last
- 13 Let's pick out items from the rubbish heap  
14 ask how the stench is like down there
- 15 Let's talk to the peach tree  
16 find out how it feels to be in the ground
- 17 Let's talk to the moon going down  
18 ask if it isn't enough eyeing what's been going on
- 19 come on  
20 let's talk to the devil himself  
21 it's about time



5.1 With close reference to the **diction**, **imagery** and **tone** used in this poem, discuss how the speaker explores issues of dissatisfaction and confrontation.

Your response should take the form of a well-constructed essay of 250–300 words (about ONE page).

[10]

- 5.2.1 Explain the use of the word 'stench' in line 14. (1)
- 5.2.2 Account for the repetition of the phrase, 'Let's talk' throughout the poem. (2)
- 5.2.3.1 Identify the figure of speech use in line 11. (1)

- 5.2.3.2 Comment on the effectiveness of the image in lines 11–12. (2)
- 5.2.4 Refer to lines 19–21: 'come on/let's ... it's about time'.  
Critically discuss how these lines convey the central message of the poem. (3) [10]
- 5.3.1 What is the importance of the words 'Let's talk' (line 1) in highlighting the message of the poem? (2)
- 5.3.2 Account for the 'swallows' (line 1) being a good source of information about 'other countries' (line 2). (2)
- 5.3.3 Comment on the appropriateness of the tone within the final stanza of the poem. (3)
- 5.3.4 Discuss why you think the speaker chooses to 'talk to the peach tree' (line 15).  
Consider the other 'things' or concepts he talks to in the poem. (3) [10]



6 Read the poem below and then answer the questions that follow.

**PRAYER TO MASKS – Léopold Sédar Senghor**

1 Masks! Oh Masks!  
2 Black mask, red mask, you black and white masks,  
3 Rectangular masks through whom the spirit breathes,  
4 I greet you in silence!  
5 And you too, my lion headed ancestor.  
6 You guard this place, that is closed to any feminine laughter, to any mortal smile.  
7 You purify the air of eternity, here where I breathe the air of my fathers.  
8 Masks of maskless faces, free from dimples and wrinkles.  
9 You have composed this image, this my face that bends over the altar of white paper.  
10 In the name of your image, listen to me!  
11 Now while the Africa of despotism is dying – it is the agony of a pitiable princess,  
12 Like that of Europe to whom she is connected through the navel –  
13 Now fix your immobile eyes upon your children who have been called  
14 And who sacrifice their lives like the poor man his last garment  
15 So that hereafter we may cry 'here' at the rebirth of the world being the leaven that the white flour needs.  
16 For who else would teach rhythm to the world that has died of machines and cannons?  
17 For who else should ejaculate the cry of joy, that arouses the dead and the wise in a new dawn?  
18 Say, who else could return the memory of life to men with a torn hope?  
19 They call us cotton heads, and coffee men, and oily men.  
20 They call us men of death.  
21 But we are the men of the dance whose feet only gain power when they beat the hard soil.

6.1 Sédar Senghor's poem examines the pivotal role the ancestors play in the lives of the people.

Discuss the extent to which you agree with this statement with close reference to **diction, tone and mood**.

Your response should take the form of a well-constructed essay of 250–300 words (about ONE page).

[10]

6.2.1 Refer to line 3: 'I greet you in silence!'

Comment on the fact that the speaker greets the ancestors in silence.

(2)

6.2.2 Refer to line 5: 'You guard this ... any mortal smile.'

Suggest what this line tells us about the nature of the society in the poem.

(2)

6.2.3 Refer to lines 10 and 11: 'Now while the ... through the navel-'

Critically discuss the imagery in these lines.

(3)

6.2.4 Refer to line 19: 'They call us ... and oily men'.

Suggest a reason why this imagery is used.

(3)

6.3.1 Briefly explain the connotations of the words 'prayer' and 'masks' as used in the title. (2)

6.3.2 Identify and explain the effectiveness of the tone in 'In the name of your image, listen to me!' (line 10). (2)

6.3.3 What does the speaker mean when he states that Europe and Africa are 'connected through the navel'? (line 12). (3)

6.3.4 Do you think the last two lines are effectively used as a conclusion to the poem? (3)

Discuss your answer. [10]



7 Read the poem below and then answer the questions that follow.

**THIS WINTER COMING – Karen Press**

1 walking in the thick rain  
2 of this winter we have only just entered,  
3 who is not frightened?  
4 the sea is swollen, churning in broken waves  
5 around the rocks, the sand is sinking away  
6 the seagulls will not land  
7 under this sky, this shroud falling  
8 who is not frightened?  
9 in every part of the city, sad women climbing onto buses,  
10 dogs barking in the street, and the children  
11 in every doorway crying,  
12 the world is so hungry, madam's house is clean  
13 and the women return with slow steps  
14 to the children, the street, the sky tolling like a black bell;  
15 these women are a tide of sadness  
16 they will drown the world,  
17 who is not frightened?  
18 on every corner men standing  
19 old stumps in the rain, tombstones  
20 engraved with open eyes  
21 watching the bright cars full of sated faces  
22 pass them, pass them, pass them,  
23 who is not frightened?  
24 into the rain the children are running  
25 thin as the barest twigs they kindle a fire  
26 to fight the winter, the bare bodies  
27 a raging fire of dead children  
28 and the sky collapsing under centuries of rain  
29 the wind like a mountain crying,  
30 who is not frightened of this winter  
31 coming upon us now?

7.1 The poem explores the dangers of the social and political situation at the time.

Discuss this statement with close reference to **punctuation, tone, and diction**.

Your response should take the form of a well-constructed essay of 250–300 words (about ONE page).

[10]

7.2.1 Explain what '... this winter we have only just entered' (line 2) indicates. (2)

7.2.2 Refer to line 4: 'the sea is swollen, churning in broken waves'.

Critically comment on how this image relates to the impending 'Winter'. (3)

7.2.3 Refer to lines 18–19: 'on every corner men standing/old stumps in the rain'.

Explain how this description influences your understanding of the plight of these men. (2)

7.2.4 Comment on the appropriateness of stanza 5 as a conclusion to the poem. (3)

[10]

7.3.1 What does the word 'thick' (line 1) suggest about the rain? (2)

7.3.2 Refer to lines 4 – 5: 'the sea is ... is sinking away

Comment on how the diction in these lines portrays a sense of violence. (2)

7.3.3 Comment on the effectiveness of the imagery in lines 19 – 20: 'tombstones/engraved with open eyes'. (3)

7.3.4 The sky changes throughout the poem.

Critically discuss how this statement reveals the central idea of the poem. (3)

[10]



8 Read the poem below and then answer the questions that follow.

**SOLITUDE – Ella Wheeler Wilcox**

1 Laugh, and the world laughs with you;  
2 Weep, and you weep alone.  
3 For the sad old earth must borrow its mirth,  
4 But has trouble enough of its own.  
5 Sing, and the hills will answer;  
6 Sigh, it is lost on the air.  
7 The echoes bound to a joyful sound,  
8 But shrink from voicing care.  
  
9 Rejoice, and men will seek you;  
10 Grieve, and they turn and go.  
11 They want full measure of all your pleasure,  
12 But they do not need your woe.  
13 Be glad, and your friends are many;  
14 Be sad, and you lose them all.  
15 There are none to decline your nectared wine,  
16 But alone you must drink life's gall.  
  
17 Feast, and your halls are crowded;  
18 Fast, and the world goes by.  
19 Succeed and give, and it helps you live,  
20 But no man can help you die.  
21 There is room in the halls of pleasure  
22 For a long and lordly train,  
23 But one by one we must all file on  
24 Through the narrow aisles of pain.



8.1 The poem essentially declares that while a negative attitude repulses people, a positive one attracts them.

With reference to **diction**, **tone** and **structure**, describe how the speaker reinforces the above message in the poem.

Your response should take the form of a well-constructed essay of 250–300 words (about ONE page).

[10]

8.2.1 Identify the figure of speech used in line 5 and comment on the meaning of this line as it is used in the poem.

(2)

8.2.2 Refer to line 8: 'But shrink from voicing care.'

Suggest what the word 'shrink' means as used in this line.

(2)

8.2.3 Critically discuss the theme of optimism as it is evident in this poem.

(3)

- 8.2.4 Discuss the effectiveness of the title of the poem in relation to the content of the poem. (3)  
[10]
- 8.3.1 Refer to lines 21 to 24: 'For there is ... aisles of pain.'  
Comment on the effectiveness of the imagery in these lines. (3)
- 8.3.2 Comment on the use of juxtaposition throughout the poem. (2)
- 8.3.3 Refer to lines 3–4: 'For the sad ... of its own.'  
In your own words, explain what the speaker is implying about the natural state of the world. (3)
- 8.3.4 Critically discuss the universal message of the poem. (2)  
[10]



9 Read the poem below and then answer the questions that follow.

**THE MORNING SUN IS SHINING – Olive Schreiner**

1 The morning sun is shining on  
2 The green, green willow tree,  
3 And sends a golden sunbeam  
4 To dance upon my knee.  
5 The fountain bubbles merrily,  
6 The yellow locusts spring,  
7 Of life and light and sunshine  
8 The happy brown birds sing.  
9 The earth is clothed with beauty,  
10 The air is filled with song,  
11 The yellow thorn trees load the wind  
12 With odours sweet and strong.  
13 There is a hand I never touch  
14 And a face I never see;  
15 Now what is sunshine, what is song,  
16 Now what is light to me?

9.1 The simplicity of the poem hides a deeper meaning.

Discuss this statement with close reference to **diction, style and tone**.

Your response should take the form of a well-constructed essay of 250–300 words (about ONE page).

[10]

9.2.1 Comment on how the poet uses colour to create the mood of the first stanza. (2)

9.2.2 Refer to lines 3–4: 'And sends a ... upon my knee'.

9.2.2.1 Identify the figure of speech used in this example. (1)

9.2.2.2 Explain what this image means in the context of the poem. (1)

9.2.3 Comment on how the poet's use of sound contributes to the impact of the poem. (3)

9.2.4 Discuss the effectiveness of the poem's final question as the conclusion to the poem. (3)

[10]

9.3.1 Refer to line 2: 'The green, green willow tree'. Account for the repetition in this line. (2)

9.3.2 Explain the mood that is created by the phrase, 'a golden sunbeam' in line 3. (2)

9.3.3. Refer to line 9: 'The earth is clothed with beauty'.

9.3.3.1 Identify the figure of speech used in this line. (1)

9.3.3.2 Discuss the effectiveness of the image. (2)

9.3.4 Refer to lines 13–16: 'There is a ... light to me?' Critically discuss how these lines convey the central message of the poem. (3)  
[10]

10 Read the poem below and then answer the questions that follow.

**IT IS A BEAUTEOUS EVENING, CALM AND FREE – William Wordsworth**

1 It is a beauteous evening, calm and free,  
2 The holy time is quiet as a Nun  
3 Breathless with adoration; the broad sun  
4 Is sinking down in its tranquility;  
5 The gentleness of heaven broods o'er the Sea;  
6 Listen! the mighty Being is awake,  
And doth with his eternal motion make  
8 A sound like thunder—everlastingly.  
9 Dear child! dear Girl! that walkest with me here,  
10 If thou appear untouched by solemn thought,  
11 Thy nature is not therefore less divine:  
12 Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year;  
13 And worshipp'st at the Temple's inner shrine,  
14 God being with thee when we know it not.

10.1 The poem demonstrates the speaker's deep spiritual response and admiration for nature.

With reference to **structure**, **imagery** and **tone**, critically discuss the above statement.

Your response should take the form of a well-constructed essay of 250 – 300 words (about ONE page).

[10]

10.1.1 Identify the atmosphere in line 1. (1)

10.2.3 Explain the effect of the punctuation mark in 'Listen!' (line 6). (2)

10.2.3 Account for the sun's being described as 'broad' (line 3) in the context of the poem. (2)

10.2.4 Refer to lines 6–8: 'the mighty Being ... like thunder – everlastingly.'  
Discuss the effectiveness of the simile in these lines. (2)

10.2.5 Critically discuss how the structure of the poem is used to convey its central message. (3)  
[10]

11 Read the poem below and then answer the questions that follow.

**FERN HILL – Dylan Thomas**

1 Now as I was young and easy under the apple boughs  
2 About the liting house and happy as the grass was green,  
3 The night above the dingle starry,  
4 Time let me hail and climb  
5 Golden in the heydays of his eyes,  
6 And honoured among wagons I was prince of the apple towns  
7 And once below a time I lordly had the trees and leaves  
8 Trail with daisies and barley  
9 Down the rivers of the windfall light.  
10 And as I was green and carefree, famous among the barns  
11 About the happy yard and singing as the farm was home,  
12 In the sun that is young once only,  
13 Time let me play and be  
14 Golden in the mercy of his means,  
15 And green and golden I was huntsman and herdsman, the calves  
16 Sang to my horn, the foxes on the hills barked clear and cold,  
17 And the sabbath rang slowly  
18 In the pebbles of the holy streams.  
19 All the sun long it was running, it was lovely, the hay  
21 Fields high as the house, the tunes from the chimneys, it was air  
21 And playing, lovely and watery  
22 And fire green as grass.  
23 And nightly under the simple stars  
24 As I rode to sleep the owls were bearing the farm away,  
25 All the moon long I heard, blessed among stables, the nightjars  
26 Flying with the ricks, and the horses  
27 Flashing into the dark.  
28 And then to awake, and the farm, like a wanderer white  
29 With the dew, come back, the cock on his shoulder: it was all  
30 Shining, it was Adam and maiden,  
31 The sky gathered again  
32 And the sun grew round that very day.  
33 So it must have been after the birth of the simple light  
34 In the first, spinning place, the spellbound horses walking warm  
35 Out of the whinnying green stable  
36 On to the fields of praise.  
37 And honoured among foxes and pheasants by the gay house  
38 Under the new made clouds and happy as the heart was long  
39 In the sun born over and over,  
40 I ran my heedless ways,  
41 My wishes raced through the house high hay  
42 And nothing I cared, at my sky blue trades, that time allows



43 In all his tuneful turning so few and such morning songs  
44 Before the children green and golden  
45 Follow him out of grace,  
46 Nothing I cared, in the lamb white days, that time would take me  
47 Up to the swallow thronged loft by the shadow of my hand,  
48 In the moon that is always rising,  
49 Nor that riding to sleep  
50 I should hear him fly with the high fields  
51 And wake to the farm forever fled from the childless land.  
52 Oh, as I was young and easy in the mercy of his means,  
53 Time held me green and dying  
54 Though I sang in my chains like the sea.

- 11.2.1 What is the significance of the references to colours in the poem? (2)
- 11.2.2 What does this poem suggest about Thomas's view of the relationship between humankind and nature? (2)
- 11.2.3 Refer to line 22: 'And fire green as grass.'
- 11.2.3.1 Identify the figure of speech in this line. (1)
- 11.2.3.2 Discuss the effectiveness of the figure of speech identified above. (2)
- 11.2.4 Discuss the tone in the first three stanzas of the poem and explain the turning point in the change in tone in stanza 4. (3)

[10]



12 Read the poem below and then answer the questions that follow.

**THE SHIPWRECK – Emily Dickinson**

- 1 Glee! The great storm is over!
- 2 Four have recovered the land;
- 3 Forty gone down together
- 4 Into the boiling sand.
  
- 5 Ring, for the scant salvation!
- 6 Toll, for the bonnie souls,
- 7 Neighbour and friend and bridegroom,
- 8 Spinning upon the shoals!
  
- 9 How they will tell the shipwreck
- 10 When winter shakes the door,
- 11 Till the children ask, 'But the forty?
- 12 Did they come back no more?'
  
- 13 Then a silence suffuses the story,
- 14 And a softness the teller's eye;
- 15 And the children no further question,
- 16 And only the waves reply.

12.1 Dickinson's poem examines how people are at the mercy of nature.

Discuss this statement with close reference to **diction, imagery** and **tone**.

Your response should take the form of a well-constructed essay of 250–300 words (about ONE page).

[10]

12.2.1 Identify and explain the mood in line 1.

(2)

12.2.2 Refer to line 7; 'Neighbour and friend and bridegroom'.

Explain why the victims of the shipwreck are described in this manner.

(2)

12.3. Refer to lines 3–4: 'Forty gone down together/Into the boiling sand.'

12.3.1 Identify the figure of speech used in these lines.

(1)

12.3.2 Comment on the effectiveness of this image.

(2)

12.3.4 Refer to lines 13–16: 'Then a silence ... the waves reply.'

Critically discuss the effectiveness of these lines as a conclusion to the poem.

(3)  
[10]

**UNSEEN POETRY (COMPULSORY)**

13 Read the poem below and then answer the questions that follow.

**THE ABANDONED MINE – Charles Claybrook Wollacott**

A heap of rocks marks the abandoned mine.  
The veld's unpitying silence lies around  
Those broken stones – a mute and mournful sign  
Of human enterprise with failure crowned.  
Here is the trail along which used to pass  
The workers to and fro: a narrow track  
That winds away among the bush and grass –  
But those who trod it will no more come back!

Time, with slow hands, shall from the scene anew  
Repair the gashes in the wounded soil,  
And cover up the last remaining clue  
To a poor useless record of men's toil.  
And this is the mound they built when hopes were high,  
Shall be a grave, where those hopes buried lie.

- 13.1 Account for the use of the word, 'abandoned' in the title and line 1 of the poem. (2)
- 13.2 Refer to lines 5–8: 'Here is the ... more come back!'  
Identify and explain the tone conveyed in these lines. (2)
- 13.3 Refer to lines 9–12: 'Time, with slow ... of men's toil.'
- 13.3.1 Identify the figure of speech in these lines. (1)
- 13.3.2 Comment on how this image adds meaning to the poem. (2)
- 13.4 Refer to lines 13–14: 'And this the ... hopes buried lie.'

Critically discuss how the diction in these lines contributes to the central idea of the poem. Your response should include TWO examples of diction.

(3)  
**[10]**

14 Read the poem below and then answer the questions that follow.

**THE CLOTHES – Mongane Wally Serote**

1 I came home in the morning.  
2 There on the stoep,  
3 The shoes I knew so well  
4 Dripped water like a window crying dew;  
5 The shoes rested the first time  
6 From when they were new.  
7 Now it's forever.

8 I looked back,  
9 On the washing line hung  
10 A shirt, jacket and trousers  
11 Soaked wet with pity,  
12 Wrinkled and crying reddish water, perhaps also salty;  
13 The pink shirt had a gash on the right,  
14 And stains that told the few who know  
15 An item of our death-live lives.

16 The colourless jacket still had mud,  
17 Dropping lazily from its body  
18 To join the dry earth beneath.

19 The over-sized black striped trousers,  
20 Dangled from one hip,  
21 Like a man from a rope 'neath his head,  
22 Tired of hoping to hope.



14.1 Refer to lines 5–6: 'The shoes rested ... they were new.'

What impression is created of the person to whom the shoes belonged? (2)

14.2 Refer to lines 3–4: 'The shoes I ... window crying dew'.

Explain how the mood is created in these lines. (2)

14.3 Comment on the speaker's personifying the clothing throughout the poem (3)

14.4 Refer to stanza 4: 'The over-sized black ... hoping to hope.'

Critically discuss how this stanza conveys the central message of the poem. (3)

**[10]**

15 Read the poem below and then answer the questions that follow.

### AFRICAN GRASS – Shimmer Chinodya

1 Grass grows here, enough  
2 To thatch a thousand roofs.  
3 Tall khaki African grass  
4 Two heads taller than I, laden  
5 With beads of dew  
6 In the early morning. Shove armfuls aside  
7 To pass.

8 Grass caressing my bare thighs  
9 Sweeping past me, rustling softly  
10 like lovers.  
11 Adam and Eve once walked here  
12 Naked and innocent in this wild savannah;  
13 When the world was young  
14 And there was no one else to watch.

15 It's hard to think that this tall crop  
16 Coarse in its maturity  
17 Burst out of October's black burnt plains  
18 Green and succulent, and savouring the mellow sun  
19 Green to this height.  
20 But it's harder yet to think  
21 That this crop will crumple  
22 To veld fire ashes;  
23 Fruitless growth!

24 This whispering  
25 Shall be  
26 Gone.



- 15.1 What does the word, 'laden' (line 4) suggest about the dew? (2)
- 15.2 Refer to lines 8–10: 'Grass caressing my ... softly / like lovers.'  
Explain what these lines convey about the speaker's attitude toward the grass. (2)
- 15.3 Refer to lines 24–26: 'This whispering / Shall be / Gone.'  
Discuss how the length of these lines reinforces the speaker's tone. (3)
- 15.4 With close reference to stanza 3 (lines 15–23), comment on the speaker's observations about the cycle of nature. (3)

[10]

16 Read the poem below and then answer the questions that follow.

**LIVING SPACE – Imtiaz Dharker**

1 There are just not enough  
2 straight lines. That  
3 is the problem.  
4 Nothing is flat  
5 or parallel. Beams  
6 balance crookedly on supports  
7 thrust off the vertical.  
8 Nails clutch at open seams.  
9 The whole structure leans dangerously  
10 towards the miraculous.  
  
11 Into this rough frame,  
12 someone has squeezed  
13 a living space  
  
14 and even dared to place  
15 these eggs in a wire basket,  
16 fragile curves of white  
17 hung out over the dark edge  
18 of a slanted universe,  
19 gathering the light  
20 into themselves,  
21 as if they were  
22 the bright, thin walls of faith



16.1 Refer to lines 1–7: 'There are just ... off the vertical.'

What impression of the building is created in these lines?

(2)

16.2 Refer to lines 9–10: 'The whole structure ... towards the miraculous.'

Discuss the use of the word, 'miraculous' in the context of the poem.

(2)

16.3 Refer to line 8: 'Nails clutch at open seams.'

Comment on the effectiveness of the image in the above line.

(3)

16.4 Despite the uncertainty of life in these circumstances, the poem offers hope for the future.

Do you agree with this statement? Justify your response with reference to the final stanza.

(3)

**[10]**

17 Read the poem below and then answer the questions that follow.

**NETTLES<sup>1</sup> – Vernon Scannell**

1 My son aged three fell in the nettle bed.  
2 'Bed' seemed a curious name for those green spears,  
3 That regiment of spite behind the shed:  
4 It was no place for rest. With sobs and tears  
5 The boy came seeking comfort and I saw  
6 White blisters beaded on his tender skin.  
7 We soothed him till his pain was not so raw.  
8 At last he offered us a watery grin,  
9 And then I took my billhook<sup>2</sup>, honed the blade  
10 And went outside and slashed in fury with it  
11 Till not a nettle in that fierce parade  
12 Stood upright anymore. And then I lit  
13 A funeral pyre<sup>3</sup> to burn the fallen dead,  
14 But in two weeks the busy sun and rain  
15 Had called up tall recruits behind the shed:  
16 My son would often feel sharp wounds again.

**Glossary:** 1 nettles – a plant that stings when touched  
2 billhook – a cutting tool; machete  
3 pyre – bonfire



- 17.1 Refer to lines 1–4: 'My son aged ... place for rest.'  
What impression of the nettles is suggested in these lines? (2)
- 17.2 Refer to lines 12–13: 'And then I ... the fallen dead'.  
Explain how these lines convey the speaker's attitude toward the nettles. (2)
- 17.3 Refer to lines 14–15: 'But in two ... behind the shed'.  
Discuss the effectiveness of the image in these lines. (3)
- 17.4 Critically comment on how the diction in this poem conveys the speaker's perspective of parenthood. (3)

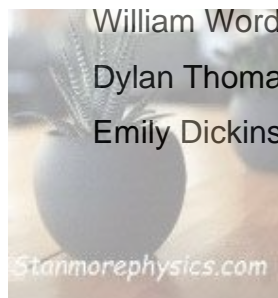
**[10]**



## GRADE 12 SUGGESTED ANSWERS POETRY QUESTION BANK JUNE 2024

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## 1 SONNET 130 – William Shakespeare

1.1 The speaker mocks the manner in which women are presented in traditional love poetry.

Discuss the extent to which you agree with this statement with close reference to **imagery, tone** and **structure**.

Your response should take the form of a well-constructed essay of 250–300 words (about ONE page).

- Use the following points, among others, as a guideline to marking this question. Responses might differ, depending on the candidate's sensitivity to and understanding of the poem.
- Refer the rubric to assess this question
  - Traditional love poetry often uses clichéd, exaggerated and idealised comparisons to describe a woman's beauty.
  - However, the speaker thinks the comparisons in traditional love poetry are insincere, unrealistic and unattainable and do not demonstrate authentic love.
  - The speaker's intention is to demonstrate that true love is not superficial and goes beyond physical beauty.
  - The quatrains mock/satirise the clichéd comparisons usually employed by poets; however, the speaker states his mistress is nothing like these idealised descriptions. The couplet reveals his genuine love and how these comparisons are meaningless and 'false'. By refusing to paint a romanticised picture of his loved one, he emphasises her true worth.
  - The comparisons used in the first quatrain imply that bright eyes, red lips, pale skin and soft hair are the standards by which beauty is measured. By stating that his mistress possesses none of these attributes, the speaker challenges this traditional portrayal of beauty.
  - The second quatrain expands on the idea that his mistress does not conform to unrealistic comparisons of beauty. She does not have rosy cheeks or perfumed breath but rather natural colouring and natural smelling breath.
  - The third quatrain contains the speaker's first positive comment about his mistress ('I love to hear her speak') but he immediately undermines this compliment by claiming that music is more pleasant than her voice. This shows that the speaker values his mistress's thoughts; he enjoys having conversations with her and is not concerned about the sound of her voice.
  - By rejecting the comparison to a 'goddess', the speaker normalises his beloved. The word, 'treads' implies a firm and stable step; this might indicate that she is a solid/real presence in his life.
  - The couplet conveys how the speaker values his loved one and sees her as 'rare'. She does not need artificial comparisons to be appreciated as they would not do her justice. This is a more genuine expression of love than the false comparisons traditionally used in love poems.

[10]

- Initially, the tone appears to be derogatory and unflattering; however, while the tone of the third quatrain is more appreciative, sincere adoration is evident in the rhyming couplet.
- Overall, the tone might be described as ironic/satirical/mocking as the poem is a parody of traditional love poems. [370 words].

[Credit valid alternative responses.]

|                              |   |      |
|------------------------------|---|------|
| CONTENT                      | Interpretation of topic.<br>Depth of argument.<br>Justification and grasp of text.          | (6)  |
| STRUCTURE<br>AND<br>LANGUAGE | Structure.<br>Logical flow and presentation.<br>Language, style and tone used in the essay. | (4)  |
| TOTAL                        |   | [10] |

1.2.1 Refer to line 1: 'My mistress; eyes are nothing like the sun,'.

Identify and explain the figure of speech used in these lines.

This is an example of SIMILE.

In an ironic manner, the poet compares his mistress's eyes to the sun, but says that they are NOT the same as the sun. In other words, if the sun is bright and shining and as such, a beacon of hope and life, the mistress's eyes cannot compare. The implication is rather, that the mistress is human; she is a real person. He does not compare her to impossible standards, because he knows her intimately and loves her for what she is, rather than for what she is NOT.

(3)

1.2.2 Comment on the difference between perceived beauty and actual beauty, according to the speaker.

Refer to the poem as a whole in order to support your answer.

The speaker shows the reader the difference between perceived beauty and actual beauty. Perceived beauty is unrealistic, impossible, artificial and therefore meaningless. In contrast, actual beauty has a genuine, human (flawed) face. The love is far more real because the speaker loves his mistress even though she is not perfect. He loves her and accepts her exactly as she is. His love does not depend upon unrealistic ideals; his love is REAL.

(3)

1.2.3 Discuss the importance of the words 'and yet' (line 13) in the context of the poem as a whole.

The words 'and yet' at the beginning of line 13 / the couplet, serve to create the volta or turn in the poem. The volta is a dramatic change in thought or emotion. This moment is important because it clearly draws our attention to the speaker's true feelings and emotions in the poem. Until now, the reader may have thought that the speaker is unkind about his mistress. The truth is reflected in the volta: he loves her despite her imperfections – maybe even because of her imperfections.

(2)

1.2.4 Identify and explain the mood in lines 13 and 14.

(2)

The mood is triumphant, satisfied. The poet explores all the false imagery and is convinced that his mistress is, indeed perfect just as she is. She is true; not false.

[10]

## 2 THE CHILD THAT WAS SHOT DEAD BY SOLDIERS AT NYANGA – Ingrid Jonker

- 2.1 The title of Jonker's poem creates the expectation of a dead child. However, the contents of the poem contradict the title.

Discuss the extent to which you agree with this statement with close reference to **diction, imagery and tone**

Your response should take the form of a well-constructed essay of 250–300 words (about ONE page).

### DICTION

- The title of the poem states that 'the child is dead'
- However, the first line of the poem contradicts this by stating that 'the child is not dead' (line 1, line 11)
- It portrays that the child is still alive by using repetition (also known as anaphora) of the words 'not dead'.
- The sense of freedom is created in the reader's mind as the 'child', in the poem grows up. He becomes a 'man' (line 21) and a 'giant' (line 22), thus creating a contradiction with the title of the poem.
- Words such as 'fists' (line 2), 'freedom' (line 4), 'blood' (line 10) and 'scream' (line 9) are meant for infusing the spirit of nationalism.
- Even though this child may be dead, the effect of his martyrdom lives forever.
- The poem begins with an allusion to Dylan Thomas's poem *A refusal to mourn the death of a child, by fire, in London*. These words again evoke a refusal to simply accept the death of the child on face value.
- According to the poet, this child can never truly die. He is 'present at all meetings' and he 'peeps through the windows of houses'.
- He still alive in their hearts and in the fight for justice and freedom
- He is not dead.
- The armed forces cannot kill him or others like him present in the coloured townships such as 'Langa', 'Nyanga', 'Orlando', and 'Philippi' (lines 12 and 13). The list of geographical locations emphasize that the fight for freedom is widespread across the country.

### IMAGERY

- Visual Imagery: In the first two stanzas, the poet uses the image of a child who raises his fists to show his resistance towards apartheid.
- Organic Imagery: Throughout this poem, the poet uses this imagery to infuse her anger in readers' minds. After reading the lines such as 'where he lies with a bullet in his head' (line 16) readers feel angry and at the same time sorry for the innocent child.

### TONE

- In the first three stanzas of the poem, the tone is firm, and it highlights the fact that even an innocent child understands the value of freedom and equality.

[10]

- Hence, through the poet's voice, the spirit of the child screams out to his countrymen to end their suffering by standing together for the sake of saving other children like him.
- Other terms to describe the tone of the poem are bold, determined, rebellious, anti-establishment, defiant and confrontational.
- These ideas once again contradict the death of the child. His strong spirit will live on in the hearts and minds of others.

### STRUCTURE AND LANGUAGE

- Learners are reminded that FOUR MARKS are allocated for the structure and language used in the poem.
- Proper planning and paragraphing are essential.
- The essay must be FORMAL.
- Paragraphs should be clearly LINKED to each other.
- All three aspects asked must be mentioned i.e.: DICTION, IMAGERY and TONE.
- The essay should have a clear introduction and conclusion.

2.2.1 What is suggested by the phrase, 'the heart under siege' (line 5) in the context of the poem?

The poem deals with the restrictive pass laws of the country. Citizens were under 'siege' in their own country as they lacked freedom of movement. By including the word 'heart', the poet suggests that the emotions of the people were also restricted. Their hearts, which represent their humanity, were under attack.

(2)

2.2.2 Account for the repetition of the words 'the child' throughout the poem.

The repetition draws attention to the subject of the poem, reminding the reader that the person who has been shot is only a child, someone young and innocent, who has died in a violent and unjust manner. The repeated words also help facilitate the journey of the child in the poem. At first, the child is dead, but later the symbolism of the child allows him to grow into free a man.

(2)

2.2.3 Refer to lines 8–9: 'screams the smell ... justice and blood'.

Comment on the effectiveness of the image in the context of the poem.

This image uses a contrast and appeals to the senses. Justice and blood are contrasted to show how unfair the system is. Justice should not lead to bloodshed; the idea of the blood and violence is upsetting and distressing. The sound of screaming and smell of conflict add to the strong emotive effect of the imagery as it allows the reader to imagine what felt like to be in the protest march.

(3)

2.2.4 Critically discuss how the mood of the poem is expressed in line 23: '(without a pass)'.

The poet wants the reader to experience the atmosphere as incendiary, outraged and hostile. The single, powerful line 'without a pass' (line 24) encourages the reader to confront the establishment with the idea that the child does not need his passbook. The idea is thrown in the face of the establishment. If stanza four is seen as a fist, the final line (stanza 5) can be seen as a visual expletive in which the poet shows the establishment the proverbial middle finger.

(3)

2.3 The poem vividly portrays the anguish, deprivation and untapped possibilities within the pursuit of freedom.

Critically discuss this statement with particular reference to the **imagery**, **diction** and **tone** used in the poem.

Your response should take the form of a well-constructed essay of 250–300 words (about ONE page).

- In *The child who was shot dead by soldiers in Nyanga* by Ingrid Jonker, the child becomes a symbol of resistance and hope.
- The title evokes sympathy, and the fact that an innocent child is killed makes it even more poignant as it also emphasises the brutality of the soldiers.
- The diction, imagery and tone used by the poet create feelings of outrage, loss, defiance and rebellion.
- The poet uses words such as ‘screams’ and ‘scream’ to draw attention to the anger which is felt at the time. Phrases such as ‘the smell of freedom’, and ‘the smell of justice and blood’ further highlight the anger and determination of the people to end the oppression to which black people were subjected (‘the heart under siege’).
- The child raising his ‘fists against his’ mother and father is indicative of the child’s (the youth’s) rebellion and refusal to remain passive in the face of an unjust and brutal system.
- The repetition of the words ‘The child is not dead’ creates the sense of freedom – which cannot be killed by bullets – that the child represents. He might be physically dead, but in the hearts, minds and memories of his people, he is still alive.
- The first line of the poem, ‘The child is not dead’, refers to the fact that the poet refutes the death of the child.
- According to the poet, the child and what he represents cannot and will not die. He is still alive in their hearts and in the fight for justice and freedom. The child is a symbol of the growing sense of freedom in the South African’s hearts against the Apartheid system. The comparison is made between freedom and the life of the child. The child is not dead, and freedom is not dead.
- The mention of the different black townships (Langa, Nyanga, Orlando and Sharpeville) shows how protests had spread to the rest of the country and in particular the reference to the Sharpeville massacre where many innocent lives were lost.
- The reference to ‘guns saracens and batons’ highlights the uncaring attitude of the soldiers who are fully armed and will not hesitate to use violence to suppress black people.
- The penultimate stanza shows that the child is everywhere: at meetings, peeping through windows, and ‘just wanted to play in the sun’ – a reference to his innocence, unrestricted freedom and simply just wanting to enjoy his childhood.
- The child’s progression to ‘a man’ and then ‘a giant’ who ‘travels through the whole world’ proves that what happened to him will have a global effect.
- The three-word ending of the poem impacts powerfully with its direct simplicity: the dead do not require a pass (the apartheid identity

document) – the main reason for the violent protests at the townships mentioned earlier.



- The poem shows anguish and deprivation.
- The tone of the poem is inspirational and passionate despite the sadness of the child's death.
- The tone can also be described as hopeful because the child is immortalised.
- In the first three stanzas of the poem, the tone is firm, and it highlights the fact that even an innocent child understood the value of freedom and equality.
- Hence, through the poet's voice, the spirit of the child screams out to his countrymen to end their suffering by standing together for the sake of saving other children like him.

[544 words]

- 2.4.1 Identify and explain the mood that is created by the phrase, 'raises his fists' in line 2.

There is a mood of militancy, anger and rebellion. The act of raising one's fist is an act of defiance and resistance towards the oppressor. There is resentment of the older generation's subservience.

[1 mark for identification of mood. 1 mark for explanation thereof.]

(2)

- 2.4.2 Explain why the phrase, 'the child' is repeated throughout the poem.

The phrase is repeated to reinforce the innocence of the child and highlight the tragedy of his death. The child represents the new generation which is not as easily subdued and which will rise up against the regime. The child's meaningless and unjust murder will not be forgotten, but will serve as a symbol of hope / inspiration that change is coming and the apartheid regime will fall.

(2)

- 2.4.3 Refer to line 16: 'The child is the shadow of the soldiers'.

- 2.4.3.1 Identify the figure of speech used in this line.

Metaphor.

(1)

- 2.4.3.2 Discuss the effectiveness of this image.

The child is compared to the shadow of soldiers suggesting that the child will plague the soldiers' conscience. Even though the soldiers do not acknowledge their wrong doings, their sins follow them. The child is an omniscient presence and a reminder of the injustice that needs to be confronted.

The image could mean that the child is stalking the soldiers to seek revenge.

(2)

- 2.4.4 Refer to line 23: 'Without a pass'.

Critically discuss the significance of this line in conveying the central message of the poem.

The speaker's reference to 'a pass' is a reminder of the oppression experienced by black South Africans and the indignity with which they were treated. It is only in death that the child is freed from having to carry a pass. It is the story of his legacy that moves freely throughout the world raising awareness of the horrors of the apartheid regime. Symbolically, the child is able to move without restriction and is able to influence the minds of people to oppose the government of the day.

(3)

It is a tragic irony that it is an anti-pass protest which results in the tragic death of the child.

[3 marks only if there is a critical discussion.]

[10]

**3 AT A FUNERAL – Dennis Brutus**

3.1 The poem vividly portrays anguish, deprivation, and untapped potential.

Discuss the extent to which you agree with this statement with close reference to **diction, tone and imagery**.

Your response should take the form of a well-constructed essay of 250–300 words (about ONE page).

**DICTION**

- any two examples, linked to anguish, deprivation, untapped potential
- 

Imagery – two examples, showing that child lives on.

Tone – two tone words with clear explanation.

Structure and language worth four marks.

**Always start in the moderate category. Move down if the learner shows little to no understanding; move up as they start discussing the topic and mentioning relevant points.**

SECTION A: Assessment rubric for literary essay: Poetry (10 Marks)

| Criteria  | Exceptional  | Skilful   | Moderate  | Elementary  | Inadequate   |
|---|--|---|---|---|--|
| <b>CONTENT</b><br><b>6 MARKS</b><br>Interpretation of topic. Depth of argument, justification and grasp of text.                        | 5–6<br>-In-depth interpretation of topic<br>-Range of striking arguments; extensively supported from poem<br>-Excellent understanding of genre and poem  | 4<br>-Shows understanding and has interpreted topic well<br>-Fairly detailed response<br>-Sound arguments given, but not all of them as well motivated as they could be<br>-Understanding of genre and poem | 3<br>-Fair interpretation of topic<br>-Some good points in support of topic<br>-Some arguments supported, but evidence is not always convincing<br>-Basic understanding of genre and poem | 2<br>-Unsatisfactory interpretation of topic<br>-Hardly any points in support of topic<br>-Inadequate understanding of genre and poem   | 0–1<br>-No understanding of the topic<br>-No reference to the poem<br>-Learner has not come to grips with genre and poem |
| <b>STRUCTURE AND LANGUAGE</b><br><b>4 MARKS</b><br>Structure, logical flow and presentation. Language, tone and style used in the essay | 4<br>-Coherent structure<br>-Arguments well-structured and clearly developed<br>-Language, tone and style mature, impressive, correct<br>-Virtually error-free grammar, spelling and punctuation | 3<br>-Clear structure and logical flow of argument<br>-Flow of argument can be followed<br>-Language, tone and style largely correct  | 2<br>-Some evidence of structure<br>-Essay lacks a well-structured flow of logic and coherence<br>-Language errors minor; tone and style mostly appropriate                               | 1<br>-Structure shows faulty planning<br>-Arguments not logically arranged<br>-Language errors evident<br>-Inappropriate tone and style | 0–1<br>-Poorly structured<br>-Serious language errors and incorrect style  |

NOTE: If a candidate has ignored the content completely and written a creative response instead, award a 0 mark for both Content and Structure and Language.

No mention of first person; contractions or past tense

A MAXIMUM of FOUR structural errors (first person; contractions or past tense)

[10]

[10]

3.2.1 Refer to lines 1–2: ‘Black, green and ... Expectant, of eternity,’.

Explain what these lines suggest about the nature of the funeral.

The black, green and gold colours refer to the colours of the ANC, which was a banned organization at the time. This is the mourners’ way of stating protesting against the government at the time. The ‘stubbled graves’ show an unkempt cemetery, where no care is taken to respect the dead. The graves (death) eats up the future of the young doctor.

(2)

3.2.2 Refer to line 4: ‘frothing the bugled dirging slopes’.

(2)

Explain the reference to a bugle in the context of the poem.

The bugle is a brass instrument, often played at a military funeral. It represents respect, honour and tradition. The bugle here is represented by the mourners attending the funeral who are crying and singing mourning songs. The military image of the ruling party is rejected in favour of a more human image where actual people pay their respects to the deceased.

3.2.3 Refer to lines 7–8: 'Oh all you ... books of birth'.

Comment on the effectiveness of this image in the context of the poem.

The 'carrion books of birth' refer to the pass books that black people were forced by law to carry. The word 'carrion' shows that the system had a dehumanizing effect, turning the carriers of pass books into nothing more rotting animal flesh. This unpleasant image helps the reader to understand the debilitating and dehumanizing nature of the system.

(3)

3.2.4 Refer to lines 10–12: 'Not death but ... should lie down.'

Critically discuss how the diction in these lines conveys the speaker's message about the regime in power.

Words like 'death', 'death's head', 'pain', 'defeat' and 'dearth' highlight and emphasise the pain and suffering caused by the apartheid system. Death and suffering were a way of life for black people – a commonplace occurrence. This shows that the poet believes the regime was unjust and treated black people extremely unfairly.

(3)  
[10]

3.3.1 With reference to the poem as whole, discuss words/ phrases/ diction that suggest a political undertone.

'Black green and gold' suggest the colours of the ANC flag. 'Carrion books of birth' refers to the passbook.

(2)

3.3.2 Refer to line 5: 'Salute! Then ponder ... this hollow panoply'.

Comment on the speaker's regard of the funeral.

The speaker wants the reader to consider more than just a funeral and death, but to look past the pomp and ceremony or 'panoply' as it is not genuine. To focus more on the life and opportunities that are lost to the one that passed away.

(2)

3.3.3 Refer to line 9: 'Arise! The brassy ... stirs our earth;'

Critically discuss the tone of the appeal the speaker is making.

The speaker shows a sense of frustration and anger. However, the word 'Arise' can also be seen as the speaker demanding the reader to stand up and make their voice heard. It can be regarded as a call to arms.

(3)

3.3.4 Refer to line 12: 'Better that we ... should lie down.'

(3)

Comment critically on the concluding line of the poem.

The use of the word 'we' includes all those who stand against oppression, that the fight is not in vain that if a person 'lies down' when attacked or arrested, they show that they are surrendering or submitting. The poet implies that it is better that the people resisting apartheid should choose to die, rather than give up or surrender.

[10]

#### 4 POEM OF RETURN – Jofre Rocha

4.1 In the poem 'Poem of Return', the speaker believes that the people who were not in exile suffered a great deal.

With reference to **diction**, **tone** and **imagery** discuss to what extent you agree with the above statement.

Your response should be in the form of a well-constructed essay of 250-300 words (about ONE page).

- It is true that as seen in the poem, people who were not in exile suffered a great deal.
- They were subjected to police brutality, torture and riots. This can be seen in the use of diction such as 'dramas'.
- The poet uses imagery such as personification to show that even nature was distressed by the suffering it witnessed. For example, he speaks of the 'tears of dawn'. This use of imagery highlights the suffering of those who did not go into
- For example, mothers have nights of 'sleeplessness' and mourn for the absence of their husbands and sons, who have died fighting for liberation.
- The mothers' arms are said to be 'bereft of sons'.
- Some died just before freedom was achieved 'day-break' and never got to witness the new dawn.
- They died thinking that their attempts were futile.
- They were disgruntled and powerless as they were equipped only with anger as seen in the words 'thread of anger snaking from their eyes' and 'wingless stone in hand'
- The speaker uses an earnest tone to express feelings of alienation and estrangement.
- Here is a simple breakdown of the rubric for the poetry mini essay:

[10]

|                              |   |      |
|------------------------------|---|------|
| CONTENT                      | Interpretation of topic.<br>Depth of argument.<br>Justification and grasp of text.          | (6)  |
| STRUCTURE<br>AND<br>LANGUAGE | Structure.<br>Logical flow and presentation.<br>Language, style and tone used in the essay. | (4)  |
| TOTAL                        |   | [10] |

4.2.1 Explain the use of the word, 'silent' (line 1) in the context of the poem.

The word, 'silence' suggests that the speaker's time in exile has been lonely and he feels isolated from his people. He misses hearing the sounds of home. Being in exile, he feels that his voice of protest may be censored.

[Award 2 marks for two distinct points.] (2)

4.2.2 Account for the use of the ellipsis in line 10.

The ellipsis creates a dramatic pause after the speaker emphatically states that he does not want flowers./The reader waits with anticipation to find out what it is that the speaker actually wants.

[Award 2 marks for two distinct points.] (2)

4.2.3 Refer to lines 3–4: 'bring me rather ... which witnesses dramas.'

4.2.3.1. Identify the figure of speech in these lines.

Personification.



(1)

4.2.3.2 Comment on the effectiveness of this image.

Dawn is personified to suggest that witnessing all the tragedy has brought it to tears ('dew'). The injustices that the people have suffered have been so immense and frequent that even nature responds with grief and sorrow.

[Award 2 marks for a comment on the effectiveness of the image.] (2)

4.2.4 Refer to lines 11–14: 'Bring me only ... from their eyes.'

Critically discuss how the final stanza reinforces the central message of the poem.

The stanza conveys how the speaker wants only one thing: justice for people who have lost their lives in the struggle for freedom. He views the people who died for the cause as the real 'heroes' as they fought a difficult and hopeless battle ('wingless stone'). The speaker is angry and insistent that their 'last wish' be fulfilled.

(3)

[Award 3 marks only if there is a critical discussion linked to the central message.]

[10]

4.3.1 Refer to line 1: '... land of exile and silence'.

Explain how the words 'exiled' and 'silence' influence your understanding of the speaker's situation.

The word 'exiled' suggests that the speaker has been banished (forced to leave) his country of birth. Having been expelled from his native land, results in him feeling isolated ('silence').

[Award 2 marks for any two relevant points.]

(2)

4.3.2 The words 'bring me' are repeated throughout the poem.

Comment on the effectiveness of this repetition and what it conveys about the speaker's request.

The repetition of 'Bring me' is an example anaphora. The speaker is assertive/commanding. It highlights what the speaker wants to hear /experience when he returns from exile. He wants to hear how the people suffered and also has a yearning for human connection/intimacy. He does not want a hero's welcome; he feels guilty about having been forced to flee his country and not being physically present during their trials.

[Award 3 marks ONLY if effectiveness of repetition and what it conveys of speaker's request is discussed]

(3)

4.3.3 Refer to lines 7–8: 'Bring me the long night of sleeplessness / with mothers mourning, their arms bereft of sons.'

Comment on how these lines highlight the experience of ordinary people.

The word 'long' indicates an extended period of time the Angolan people experienced hardships due to political turmoil. This caused many people 'sleeplessness' due to being worried about their loved ones. 'mother's mourning' is a concrete example of the grief they felt. The alliteration (repetition of 'm') adds to the sombre mood. The mothers are devastated; they have been robbed ('bereft') of their sons and can no longer hold them in their arms. These lines capture their loss and sadness.

[Award 3 marks for any two ideas well discussed OR three ideas.]

(3)

4.3.4 Refer to line 10: 'no, do not bring me flowers ...'

Comment on what the use of the emphatic negative ('no, do not') reveals about the speaker's attitude.

(3)

He is emphatic. It emphasises that the speaker is insistent about what he does not want. He feels he is not deserving of flowers nor is he a hero. There is no cause for celebration.

[Award 2 marks for any two relevant and distinctive points.]

[10]

4.4.1 Critically discuss the link between line 1 and the title of the poem.

The title indicates that the poet will return but the time is unknown, this is solidified in line 1 using the word 'when' he is certain that he will return/ it is inevitable that he will return.

(2)

4.4.2 With reference to the poem as a whole comment of the use of anaphora.

The anaphora/ repetition of the words 'bring me' highlights the command/imperative that the poet is making. It highlights that it is demanded and that one cannot but follow the instructions.

(2)

4.4.3 Refer to lines 3–4: 'Bring me rather ... which witnessed dramas.'

Comment on the effectiveness of the sound device used in these lines.

The alliteration in 'dews', 'dawns' and 'dramas' emphasises that Nature is horrified and heartbroken at the oppression of her people.

(3)

4.4.4 Refer to line 12: 'the last wish ... at day-break'.

Comment critically on the final wish of the fallen heroes.

The fallen would want to see the dawn of a new day. They would like to know that their fight has not be in vain but the dawn of a new day will mean a changed South Africa.

(3)

[10]



**5 TALK TO THE PEACH TREE – Sipho Sepamla**

5.1 With close reference to the diction, imagery and tone used in this poem, discuss how the speaker explores issues of dissatisfaction and confrontation.

Your response should take the form of a well-constructed essay of 250–300 words (about ONE page).

[10]

5.2.1 Explain the use of the word 'stench' in line 14.

The word 'stench' suggests a horrible, disgusting smell. This implies that the living conditions for people of colour were awful and inhumane during apartheid. The people of colour were treated as lacking value/disposable. 'Stench' might also imply that the apartheid system was rotten and unbearable.

[Award 2 marks for two distinct points.]

(2)

5.2.2 Account for the repetition of the phrase, 'Let's talk' throughout the poem.

The repetition creates a sense of urgency and indicates the speaker's strong desire for discussion. It emphasises the need for open communication and a peaceful resolution. It indicates the speaker's insistence on continuing the dialogue even though previous attempts at communication were futile.

[Award 2 marks for two distinct points.]

(2)

5.2.3.1 Identify the figure of speech use in line 11.

Metaphor/Personification



(1)

5.2.3.2 Comment on the effectiveness of the image in lines 11–12.

The apartheid system is compared to 'paralysing heat'. The word, 'paralysing' indicates a lack of movement which refers to the restrictive apartheid laws; 'heat' emphasises the stifling oppressive nature of the apartheid system./The 'mercilessness' of the oppressors is emphasised by the question of how long their callous treatment of people will have to be endured. This effectively conveys how the apartheid regime inflicted suffering on people of colour.

[Award 2 marks for a comment on the effectiveness of the image.]

(2)

5.2.4 Refer to lines 19–21: 'come on/let's ... it's about time'.

Critically discuss how these lines convey the central message of the poem.

The final stanza conveys a sense of urgency/resignation/cynicism and a realisation that for a resolution to be found, the oppressed will have to be courageous in overcoming their aversion to dealing with the apartheid government by conversing with 'the devil'. Despite the apparent futility in communicating with an oppressive system, there is no other option but to engage with the enemy. The blunt closing instruction highlights the inevitability of dialogue with the regime.

[Award 3 marks only if there is a critical discussion linked to the central message.]

(3)

- 5.3.1 What is the importance of the words 'Let's talk' (line 1) in highlighting the message of the poem?

Under apartheid there was little or no opportunity to understand or communicate with other people. However, the negotiations that took place in the 1990s between the different political parties were ultimately successful, and South Africa became a democratic state in 1994. Talking, as opposed to violence, resulted in a total change in government. Talking has a positive connotation, alluding to a conversation.

(2)

- 5.3.2 Account for the 'swallows' (line 1) being a good source of information about 'other countries' (line 2).

The 'swallows' represent/symbolise the visitors who come into the country, bringing news and information/new perspectives about South Africa, as this will assist the speaker to know what the sentiment is from people living outside of the country. The swallows can see a country without segregation.

(2)

- 5.3.3 Comment on the appropriateness of the tone within the final stanza of the poem.

The tone could be one of relief that after a lengthy period, finally communication between the different parties is to take place.

OR

It can be a sense of reluctance and helplessness because the process of communication has taken so long. Even though this communication will be with the 'devil himself' (line 20), it needs to happen and is long overdue. It might also relate to the announcement that Mandela was going to be released. It creates a forceful conclusion: the time has come to speak directly to the powers that have been holding black people subject to their laws for too long: 'it's about time'.

OR

Brave for confronting their demons/oppressors.  
[ONE mark for tone. TWO marks for discussion.]

(3)

- 5.3.4 Discuss why you think the speaker chooses to "talk to the peach tree" (line 15).

Consider the other "things" or concepts he talks to in the poem.

The peach tree is rooted in a permanent place (shows ownership) in the garden, unlike the other items/things he proposes with which to have a conversation. The tree will tell him how it feels to be rooted and fruitful in a place you can call your own. The connotation of rooted is permanence and fruitful implies productive and successful/ this is what the poet wants for himself and others – to feel like they're home, something they have been denied while under the apartheid regime. The peach tree symbolises strength and stability, the country will return to this when apartheid has ended.

[Candidates must refer to the apartheid government to get THREE marks]

(3)

|  |
|--|
| <b>6 PRAYER TO MASKS – Léopold Sédar Senghor</b> |
|--|

- 6.1 Sédar Senghor's poem examines the pivotal role the ancestors play in the lives of the people.

Discuss the extent to which you agree with this statement with close reference to diction, tone and mood.

Your response should take the form of a well-constructed essay of 250–300 words (about ONE page).

[10]

- 6.2.1 Refer to line 3: 'I greet you in silence!'

Comment on the fact that the speaker greets the ancestors in silence.

The silence emphasises extreme respect and awe for the ancestors. The speaker feels that he is not worthy to speak in the presence of these great ancestors, so he remains silent and respectful.

(2)

- 6.2.2 Refer to line 5: 'You guard this ... any mortal smile.'

Suggest what this line tells us about the nature of the society in the poem.

The speaker understands that in this traditional setting, the role of women is limited. More importantly, this is not a time for tenderness and gentleness. It is a time for strength and a war-like demeanour.

(2)

- 6.2.3 Refer to lines 10 and 11: 'Now while the ... through the navel.'

Critically discuss the imagery in these lines.

The speaker compares Africa to a pitiful princess or child, who depends on Europe for her life, in the same way that an unborn baby is connected to its mother via the navel and umbilical cord. The speaker is saying that while she is under the control of Europe, Africa will never be able to grow strong and independent.

(3)

- 6.2.4 Refer to line 19: 'They call us ... and oily men'.

Suggest a reason why this imagery is used.

The speaker suggests that Africa is rich in raw materials, and that the people of Africa provide, grow, harvest and mine these resources for the economic growth and prosperity of the colonial power.

(3)  
[10]

6.3.1 Briefly explain the connotations of the words 'prayer' and 'masks' as used in the title.

prayers – appeal to a higher power / ancestors – positive connotation.

'masks' – traditional masks as worn in African culture / to hide real emotions / hide true intentions. The title implies a 'thank you' to those who have been wearing the masks and to the masks themselves for being able to hide true feelings. (2)

6.3.2 Identify and explain the effectiveness of the tone in 'In the name of your image, listen to me!' (line 10).

A pleading, desperate tone. Or a respectful command filled with authority. (2)

6.3.3 What does the speaker mean when he states that Europe and Africa are 'connected through the navel'? (line 12).

This image reminds the reader of the connection of Africa to Europe, much like a baby is connected to its mother via the umbilical cord – nourishment, blood flow etc. The colonial powers in Europe were referred to as the 'mother country'.

However, this connection is a negative one – Europe colonised many countries in Africa. There was mass exploitation of people, resources and land. Greed and corruption by the colonisers left Africa damaged. The severing of the connection is necessary but difficult. Colonisers would not want to sever this connection – then they lose their wealth/resources/land/labour force etc (3)

6.3.4 Do you think the last two lines are effectively used as a conclusion to the poem?

Discuss your answer.

These lines are emphatic and strongly connected to the earth. The people are involved in a traditional dance, and they appear strong and resilient. This dance symbolises their new-found freedom and how they will regain their identity and take pride in their culture. They will share this culture and pride with the rest of the world. (3)

[10]



**7 THIS WINTER COMING – Karen Press**

7.1 The poem explores the dangers of the social and political situation at the time.

Discuss this statement with close reference to punctuation, tone, and diction.

Your response should take the form of a well-constructed essay of 250–300 words (about ONE page).

- Women are deprived of spending quality time with their families (children).
- There are sad as they go to work ‘sad women climbing onto buses’
- Their own children are hungry whilst they (women) are taking care of ‘madam’s house’.
- They steps are described as ‘slow steps’ (indicating exhaustion perhaps overworked) as they return home.
- The children left behind are also deprived of their quality time with their parent: ‘and the children in every doorway crying’.
- The sadness of women is overwhelming: ‘these women are a tide of sadness / they will drown the world’
- The men, who are under normal circumstances the protectors and providers of their families are standing in the in the corners in search of job opportunities. They are described as ghosts of their former selves ‘tombstones engraved with open eyes. Whilst they stand in the corners looking for job opportunities, ‘bright cars full of sated faces / pass them.
- Tone: Sombre and solemn

[10]

7.2.1 Explain what ‘... this winter we have only just entered’ (line 2) indicates.

In the context of the poem, ‘Winter’ suggests a season of suffering. The words ‘only just entered’ indicate that the hard times are just beginning. It alludes to the fact that there will be worse to come; no one will escape the hardship.

[Award 2 marks for any two relevant and distinctive points.]

[Credit alternate relevant response.]

(2)

7.2.2 Refer to line 4: ‘the sea is swollen, churning in broken waves’.

Critically comment on how this image relates to the impending ‘Winter’.

The ‘sea’ is described as being ‘swollen and ‘churning’. This image suggests that the ocean is a surging mass of water which is swirling. The scene is chaotic. This image highlights the ocean as a destructive force. This relates to the looming ‘Winter’ South Africa is about to face as there is a violent political and social upheaval brewing. Just like the damaging effects of an unsettled ocean, this political turmoil will have the same negative consequences on South Africans. The sibilant sound created by the repetition on the ‘s’ (sea; swollen; waves) adds to the unsettling environment.

[Award 3 marks for any two ideas well discussed OR three ideas.]

(3)

7.2.3 Refer to lines 18–19: ‘on every corner men standing/old stumps in the rain’.

Explain how this description influences your understanding of the plight of these men.

The men stand and do nothing as they are unemployed. They could be waiting for someone to collect them to work for a day. They are therefore at the mercy of those who could provide them with some form of income. The word ‘stump’ suggests they have been ‘cut down’ (dehumanised) due to the oppressive nature of the Apartheid laws.

[Award 2 marks for any two relevant and distinctive points. Credit alternate relevant response]

(3)

7.2.4 Comment on the appropriateness of stanza 5 as a conclusion to the poem.

This stanza brings the theme of hope and resistance. Although there is still an oppressive regime in power (‘rain’), ‘the children are running’ into it. Despite the children being fragile and vulnerable (‘barest twigs’), they are not intimidated. They have the potential to ignite ‘a fire’ and ‘fight the winter’. The word ‘raging’ suggests the passion of the children. Their efforts will result in the sky, which is symbolic of their oppression, to start falling. The people will sense that their oppression is going to end soon.

[Award 3 marks for any two ideas well discussed OR three ideas]

(3)  
[10]

7.3.1 What does the word ‘thick’ (line 1) suggest about the rain?

‘Heavy’ shows weight; but ‘thick’ adds texture. It is like a blanket; the visibility is poor. The word evokes a more emotive picture of the effect of the rain. There is so much rain that it appears thick.

[TWO marks for ONE idea.]

(2)

7.3.2 Refer to lines 4 – 5: ‘the sea is ... is sinking away

Comment on how the diction in these lines portrays a sense of violence.

The sea is described as ‘swollen, churning in broken waves’ this is a destructive ocean, not a peaceful and serene ocean. It is a dangerous place to be. The water ‘churns’ – a circling, agitated movement – which suggests power and violence; an upset feeling. ‘the sand is sinking’ under the force of the waves, leaving no foothold, making it a dangerous place.

[Only ONE example of diction needs to be discussed. ONE mark for Identification; ONE mark for discussion.]

(2)

7.3.3 Comment on the effectiveness of the imagery in lines 19 – 20:  
'tombstones/engraved with open eyes'.

In the metaphor, the stillness of the men is such that they seemed to be carved from stone. They have become so hardened/oppressed that they seem dead, except for their open eyes.

OR

They look dead but are alive.

OR

They are living monuments to death.

OR

The men are compared to stumps, they have been cut down, socially, and so they have to be like stone, 'hard' to ensure survival.

(3)

7.3.4 The sky changes throughout the poem.

Critically discuss how this statement reveals the central idea of the poem.

Rain comes from the sky which is now 'collapsing under centuries of rain'. At first the sky is just that – a sky. It then intensifies to a sky 'tolling like a black bell' and in the final stanza it is falling. The Apartheid system has become unbearable. The time for change has arrived, BUT things are going to get worse before they get better.

(3)

[10]



## 8 SOLITUDE – Ella Wheeler Wilcox

8.1 The poem essentially declares that while a negative attitude repulses people, a positive one attracts them.

With reference to **diction**, **tone** and **structure**, describe how the speaker reinforces the above message in the poem.

Your response should take the form of a well-constructed essay of 250–300 words (about ONE page).

- In this poem, Wilcox employs contrasts between the positive and the negative experiences in human beings to depict the nature of people in general. For instance, happiness is observed and celebrated, whereas sadness and grief are largely ignored by others.
- The contradictory reactions of people to both positive actions and negative reactions are highlighted. There is a distinct pattern that emerges in the poem. At the outset, the speaker realizes that happiness and joy attract the company of others, but sadness seems to push people away ('Laugh, and the world laughs with you, Weep and you weep alone').
- The poet juxtaposes positive and negative emotions and behaviours and shows how those behaviours either attract people or alienate them. The speaker emphasises that positive behaviours, like singing ('sing'), laughing ('mirth'), and rejoicing are infectious and attract the company of others.
- On the other hand, negative behaviours like weeping, sighing ('sigh'), grieving, and sadness ('woe') drive people away and leave you alone to suffer.
- The poet explores the general trend that when individuals are happy they will find themselves surrounded by company looking to share in their happiness, however, when an individual is sad or depressed that companionship dissipates because people do not want to be brought down by an individual's grieving. This once more elucidates the human trait that people do not care about the plight of others, although this is a generalised perception of human behaviour and may not necessarily be true in all cases.
- This emphasises the tone of the poem, which is mock-serious ('Grieve, and they turn and go') and somewhat satirical ('But no man can help you die').
- The title of the poem 'Solitude' refers to those humans who are distanced from those who seek happiness. The idea that human beings are not attracted to negativity is reiterated in the poem. The poet stresses that although we must bear our hardships alone, we should understand that happiness and grief are part of the human condition and we should remain resilient.
- Stanza one depicts a personified earth ('world laughs') and introduces the poem's main theme of the inevitable isolation that humanity faces when experiencing hardship and death. This is indicative of the nature of human beings which does not inspire much hope.
- Throughout the poem, the poet focuses on other humans' reactions to an individual's sadness. This is contained in the image of the 'nectar'd wine.

[10]

21

- The speaker here attaches heavenliness, or divinity, to happiness. The speaker suggests that people will want to share in the heavenly essence of happiness, but they will not want to “drink life’s gall,” or life’s negative aspects, with others.
- Furthermore, the use of hyperbole (‘Sing, and the hills will answer’) emphasises the extreme joy that spreads when people display happiness. This is in direct contrast to the sadness (‘sigh’) that is ‘lost in the air’ or ignored by others.
- On the one hand, the speaker describes the happy and enjoyable aspects of life as the “halls of pleasure.” and, on the other hand, “the narrow aisles of pain.” is alluded to. Pleasure is experienced in a “hall” which is generally a large space where many can congregate; meanwhile, pain takes place in a “narrow aisle,” which denotes the forced smallness and confinement to such feelings.
- This sense of isolation again reflects the poem’s main theme and argument that everyone must experience life’s hardships, including death, in solitude.
- The speaker is realistic in realising that although we must bear our hardships alone, we should understand that happiness and grief are part of the human condition.

8.2.1 Identify the figure of speech used in line 5 and comment on the meaning of this line as it is used in the poem.

Personification. You will receive a response from the world/society, and happiness will multiply.

[Award 2 marks for any two relevant and distinctive points. Credit alternate relevant responses]

(2)

8.2.2 Refer to line 8: ‘But shrink from voicing care.’

Suggest what the word ‘shrink’ means as used in this line.

The word ‘shrink’ means to pull back/withdraw. The world will become smaller as they (people) will not share in your problems/cares/issues.

[Award 2 marks for any two relevant and distinctive points.]

(2)

8.2.3 Critically discuss the theme of optimism as it is evident in this poem.

Toward the end of the poem, the poet magnifies the idea of solitude by saying that we all go alone to face death, which is the saddest thing that can happen to a person. The poem asks us to be positive and attract good company and demands us to stop being critical and negative which will only make us unhappy.

(3)

8.2.4 Discuss the effectiveness of the title of the poem in relation to the content of the poem.

The title encapsulates the poem’s essence, which focuses on the isolation often accompanying sorrow or hardship. The single word title highlights the theme of loneliness/being alone. It serves as a central motif around which the other themes

(3)

revolve. The title resonates with the isolation experienced by people, because your grief is not as welcomed as your joy.

[Award 3 marks ONLY if the effectiveness of the title is conveyed]

[10]

8.3.1 Refer to lines 21 to 24: 'For there is ... aisles of pain.'

Comment on the effectiveness of the imagery in these lines.

A metaphor is used to describe happiness. It is compared to a house with big rooms ('roomy halls') that can hold many guests ('a large and lordly train'), where people enjoy having parties (halls of pleasure) while pain is compared to a narrow aisle which implies a corridor that people have to move through alone.

(3)

8.3.2 Comment on the use of juxtaposition throughout the poem.

The use of opposites like 'laugh and weep', 'rejoice and grieve', 'pleasure and woe', 'feast and fast', emphasises the different reactions to the emotions that are experienced message.

(2)

8.3.3 Refer to lines 3 and 4. In your own words explain what the speaker is implying about the natural state of the world.

The world is naturally sad and cannot be looked

(2)

8.4.4 Critically discuss the universal message of the poem.

The poem clearly shows that people unite with happiness and that sadness will isolate you. In spite of this there is the point that joy and sorrow are part of life and we cannot escape it but rather we should endure it to become a stronger person.

(3)  
[10]



9 THE MORNING SUN IS SHINING – Olive Schreiner

9.1 The simplicity of the poem hides a deeper meaning.

Discuss this statement with close reference to diction, style and tone.

Your response should take the form of a well-constructed essay of 250–300 words (about ONE page).

[10]

9.2.1 Refer to line 2: 'The green, green willow tree'. Account for the repetition in this line.

The word 'green' is repeated to emphasise the intensity of the colour of the tree. / The vitality of nature is evident. This implies that nature is abundant, vibrant and lush. The rhythm conveys the speaker's appreciation of the beauty of nature.

[2 marks for two distinct points.]

(2)

9.2.2 Explain the mood that is created by the phrase, 'a golden sunbeam' in line 3.

The reference to a 'golden sunbeam' creates a mood of happiness / joyfulness / cheerfulness. The warmth and light associated with the sun is both comforting and uplifting. A state of well-being is evident.

[1 mark for identification of mood; 1 mark for explanation thereof.]

(2)

9.2.3 Refer to line 9: 'The earth is clothed with beauty'.

9.2.3.1 Identify the figure of speech used in this line.

Personification.

(1)

9.2.3.2 Discuss the effectiveness of the image.

Every part of the earth is adorned / decorated with beauty. The beauty is all-encompassing and surrounds / covers everything. Being surrounded by this beauty is uplifting and awe-inspiring.

[2 marks for a discussion of the effectiveness of the image]

(2)

9.2.4 Refer to lines 13–16: 'There is a ... light to me?' Critically discuss how these lines convey the central message of the poem.

In these lines the speaker refers to the loss of a loved one. She is consumed by her grief and she is not able to appreciate or take comfort in the beauty of nature. The repetition of the word 'never' emphasizes the finality of death. Her despair renders the beauty of her surroundings meaningless to her; the rhetorical question which concludes the poem reinforces this.

(3)

[10]

9.3.1 Comment on how the poet uses colour to create the mood of the first stanza.

The opening stanza contains references to yellow, gold, green and brown. The warm colours of the sunshine, the 'golden sunbeam' (line 3). The sparkle of the fountain, the 'green, green' (line 2) tree and the happy brown birds' (line 8) make this scene cheerful and attractive.

The vivid, bright colours of nature make the joyful mood of this scene idyllic.

[Award one mark for one specific example and one mark for reference to the mood.]

(2)

9.3.2 Refer to lines 3–4: 'And sends a ... upon my knee'.

9.3.2.1 Identify the figure of speech used in this example.

Personification.

(1)

9.3.2.2 Explain what this image means in the context of the poem.

It adds to the perfection of the scene as the sunbeam is sent 'to dance' (line 4) on the speaker's knee, as of nature itself is revelling in the glorious moment. The rays of sunshine seem to conspire with the parent, the sun, to celebrate the joy by dancing.

(1)

9.3.3 Comment on how the poet's use of sound contributes to the impact of the poem.

The simple rhyme scheme of every second line rhyming, and the resultant regular rhythm seems almost playful and childlike in its simplicity and predictable nursery-rhyme effect. The references to the sounds of the fountain's merry bubbling, happy birds singing and the song in the air all add to the idealized scene of contentment.

The change in tone is all the more dramatic and unexpected in contrast. The breakdown in rhythm in line 13 makes the shift more noticeable.

The jarring interruption of the happy sing-song verse emphasizes the speaker's sadness and adds to its impact.

[Award three marks for one example, well discussed, or two examples.]

(3)

9.3.4 Discuss the effectiveness of the poem's final question as the conclusion to the poem.

The nature of the question tells us how bereft the speaker feels. She is demonstrating how all the beauty and cheer of the scene mean nothing to her in her current state and asks what value this light can have in the face of her yearning for the 'hand' (line 13) and 'face' (line 14) that are denied to her.

By ending the poem this way, the reader gains some understanding of the speaker's feelings, and responds sympathetically to her situation.

(3)

**[10]**

**10 IT IS A BEAUTEOUS EVENING, CALM AND FREE – William Wordsworth**

10.1 The poem demonstrates the speaker's deep spiritual response and admiration for nature.

With reference to **structure**, **imagery** and **tone**, critically discuss the above statement.

Your response should take the form of a well-constructed essay of 250 – 300 words (about ONE page).

Use the following points, among others, as a guideline to marking this question.

- Responses might differ, depending on the candidate's sensitivity to and understanding of the poem.
- Refer to the poetry essay rubric to assess this question.

**Structure**

- Petrarchan Sonnet or Italian Sonnet
- 14 lines divided into:
  - **Octave:** lines 1–8: the speaker expresses the awe he experiences for the beauty of nature (the evening).
  - Describes the speaker's spiritual response to the natural surroundings.
  - **Sestet:** lines 9–14: shift in focus when the speaker shares the intimate moment with his daughter who seems to be unaffected by the incredible scene before them.

**Octave**

- It is a beauteous evening, calm and free: the word 'calm' (line 1) and 'tranquil (line 4) suggests a peaceful atmosphere.
- 'free' implies an environment where there are no worries and stress – a serene situation.
- The speaker compares this 'holy time' of day (a reference to evening vespers/prayers) to 'a Nun / Breathless with adoration.' In other words, it is so quiet, it is as though the world itself is holding its breath out of respect for nature's beauty, only a nun could be breathless as she is completely absorbed in her love for God.
- 'holy time' could also relate to what the speaker is feeling as it is he who is entranced by the beauty of nature.
- 'holy'; 'Nun'; and 'adoration' – have spiritual connotations. This contributes to a respectful/worshipful tone which evident throughout the poem.
- The speaker calls the sky above the ocean the 'gentleness of heaven,' suggesting that it is the place where God calmly watches over the world.
- This image personifies 'heaven' as being gentle. This links with the peaceful atmosphere of the scene.
- Amid the tranquillity, the speaker's attention shifts to his companion, 'the mighty Being' who is 'awake' and the thunderous sounds of the waves.
- These lines contrast with the previously serene atmosphere.
- The use of the exclamation mark indicates the speaker's excitement when he commands his companion to 'Listen! 'This intrudes on the peaceful

**[10]**

atmosphere experienced by the speaker earlier. The reader also becomes aware that the speaker has a companion.

- A very quiet moment is broken by this imperative as he wants his companion to be an active participant.
- 'mighty Being' is awake': religious connotations. Literally it refers to the sea but figuratively it refers to God.
- Simile: breaking waves sound like thunder. Indicates power of nature and God
- God is the one making the waves move and is also the powerful 'mover' and shaker behind all things.
- 'Eternal' and 'everlasting' suggests God and the sea will go on forever.
- Overall, the speaker's language portrays the natural world as a divine creation for which he shows a deep reverence.

### Sestet

- The speaker addresses his daughter who seems oblivious to the beauty of nature around her.
- The scene does not seem to inspire the same solemn thoughts in her as it has done to the poet.
- However, this does not make her less divine.
- On the contrary, she is always close to the divine as she 'liest in Abraham's bosom all the year'.
- God is with her and she is worshipping even if it is not apparent to an observer as children have a special connection with God. The scenic atmosphere stirs the speaker's reverence toward God and nature, and it also prompts the speaker's reflections. [519 words]

[Credit valid alternative responses.]

|                              |   |             |
|------------------------------|---|-------------|
| CONTENT                      | Interpretation of topic.<br>Depth of argument.<br>Justification and grasp of text.          | (6)         |
| STRUCTURE<br>AND<br>LANGUAGE | Structure.<br>Logical flow and presentation.<br>Language, style and tone used in the essay. | (4)         |
| TOTAL                        |   | <b>[10]</b> |

10.2.1 Identify the atmosphere in line 1.

There is an atmosphere of serenity / peace/ relaxation / tranquility. (1)

10.2.2 Explain the effect of the punctuation mark in 'Listen!' (line 6).

The exclamation mark compels the speaker's companion / the reader to focus on her surroundings. He is instructing her to pay attention to the magnificence of God's creation. The exclamation mark reinforces the commanding / imperative tone.

[2 marks for two distinct points.] (2)

10.2.3 Account for the sun's being described as 'broad' (line 3) in the context of the poem.

The sun appears huge on the horizon as it sets. The colours of sunset spread out across the vast ocean. The sun is a reminder of God's omnipotence / presence in the world.

(2)

10.2.4 Refer to lines 6–8: 'the mighty Being ... like thunder – everlastingly.' Discuss the effectiveness of the simile in these lines.

The noise of crashing waves is compared to the sound of thunder. This emphasizes the loudness and power of God's creation.

(3)

10.2.5 Critically discuss how the structure of the poem is used to convey its central message.

In the octave of the sonnet, the speaker contemplates the beauty and power of God's creation. He is in awe of the 'tranquility' and gentleness' surrounding him and feels a sense of reverence for nature's might. In the sestet, the speaker realises that children do not have these solemn thoughts and moments because they are naturally close to God. Children have an instinctive appreciation of God's power and love.

[3 marks only if there is a critical discussion.]

(3)

**[10]**



**11 FERN HILL – Dylan Thomas**

- 11.1 Discuss the extent to which you agree with this statement with close reference to imagery, tone, and diction.

Your response should take the form of a well-constructed essay of 250–300 words (about ONE page).

**[10]**

- 11.2.1 What is the significance of the references to colours in the poem?

He makes many references to the colours green and golden. Green implies youth and vitality. New grass in Spring, new leaves, rebirth. Gold has connotations of wealth and beauty and Autumn – leaves turning and sunlight and yellow flowers. Golden also has connotations of glory.

(2)

- 11.2.2 What does this poem suggest about Thomas' view of the relationship between humankind and nature?

There is complete harmony between humankind and Nature. The boy and Nature are never in conflict. They live harmoniously together. Each day is like the creation of Earth – guiltless, relaxed, calm, idyllic.

(2)

- 11.2.3 Refer to line 22: 'And fire green as grass.'

- 11.2.3.1 Identify the figure of speech in this line.

Accept simile OR metaphor OR alliteration

(1)

- 11.2.3.2 Discuss the effectiveness of the figure of speech identified above.

Simile. The speaker says that the fire is green, just like grass. Youth is compared to grass. It is the time of one's life that is full of vitality.

Metaphor: It might imply that the grass is like a green flame, evoking the intense beauty and magic that children are capable of perceiving in the natural world.

(2)

- 11.2.4 Discuss the tone in the first three stanzas of the poem and explain the turning point in the change in tone in stanza 4.

There is a tone/feeling/atmosphere of joy and happiness. Youth and Nature are celebrated. The speaker is happy and carefree. In stanza 4, the speaker mentions that he 'awakes' – this is the turning point. He is no longer young and carefree. He reflects on happier times and the nostalgia is apparent. He is aware of his loss of innocence – like Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.

(3)

**[10]**

## 12 THE SHIPWRECK – Emily Dickinson

12.1 Dickinson's poem examines how people are at the mercy of nature.

Discuss this statement with close reference to **diction, imagery** and **tone**.

Your response should take the form of a well-constructed essay of 250–300 words (about ONE page).

- Nature is portrayed as a dominant force and people are subjected to its destructive powers.
- A 'great storm' has wreaked havoc on a community and has caused loss of lives, grief and mourning.
- The storm causes the water to surge, which stirs up the ocean bed creating a dangerous mix of sand and water. The turbulent, whirling motion of the rough sea is similar to the bubbling movement of boiling water.
- Joy and elation are felt for the survivors who 'recovered the land' safely as they have escaped an almost certain death.
- However, this relief is short-lived and replaced by a sense of loss and grief for those who violently drowned at sea. 'Spinning' implies that the bodies were tossed around in the powerful sea. Their being so close to land ('shoals') heightens the tragedy. The magnitude of the deaths is in stark contrast to the few who have survived ('scant salvation').
- Nature is ruthlessly indiscriminate; the 'souls' are family and friends. By listing the intimate roles; 'neighbour, friend and bridegroom', that people played in people's lives, the bereavement is more personal and severe.
- Winter is a season that is harsh and unrelenting ; 'winter shakes the door' is a reminder that people are at the mercy of battering winds and extreme cold.
- Winter is also figuratively associated with the inevitable cycle of life and death.
- 'silence suffuses the story' implies that there are no words to explain to the children that nature is a destructive and lethal force.
- People cannot understand the mysterious ways of nature and therefore 'only the waves reply' when people try to make sense of the contradictory aspects of nature which can both give life and take it away so violently.
- Initially the tone is one of joy and relief that nature has been compassionate and has spared the lives of some people. However the tone quickly changes to horror / dismay as the devastation of the storm is described. The concluding tone is mournful / sorrowful and grieving as the enormity of the tragedy is realised.

[10]

12.2.1 Identify and explain the mood in line 1.

The exclamation 'Glee!' creates a mood of joy/happiness/relief that the danger presented by the storm has passed.

[Award 1 mark for the identification of mood and 1 mark for an explanation.]

(2)

12.2.2 Refer to line 7; 'Neighbour and friend and bridegroom'.

Explain why the victims of the shipwreck are described in this manner.

The words acknowledge the close and varied relationships that exist between people in the community; this intensifies the sense of loss and makes the tragedy more personal and real. The deceased were part of a community and each one may have left behind a loved one, thus intensifying their loss. [Award 2 marks for one idea well-explained.]

(2)

12.3. Refer to lines 3–4: 'Forty gone down together/Into the boiling sand.'

12.3.1 Identify the figure of speech used in these lines.

Metaphor / euphemism

(1)

12.3.2 Comment on the effectiveness of this image.

The storm has caused huge surges of water to stir up the ocean bed and has created a dangerous concoction of sand and water. The turbulent, whirling motion of the rough sea is similar to the bubbling movement of boiling water. The image is effective because it emphasises the violence and terror of the forty people who lost their lives under such horrific circumstances.

[Award 2 marks for a comment on the effectiveness of the image.]

(2)

12.3.4 Refer to lines 13–16: 'Then a silence ... the waves reply.'

Critically discuss the effectiveness of these lines as a conclusion to the poem.

The last stanza is effective as it conveys the finality of death and the idea that nature is a powerful force; people are at the mercy of nature and it cannot be controlled. There is a poignant acceptance of the mysterious workings of nature. The children realise that there is no way of explaining a natural disaster that claims so many lives. There is an acknowledgment that 'only the waves' have the answers; there are some things that are inexplicable and beyond the comprehension of people.

[Award 3 marks only if there is a critical discussion linked to the conclusion.]

(3)  
**[10]**

12.4.1 What is the effect of the exclamation marks in lines 1 and 5? How does this contrast to the exclamation mark used in line 8?

The exclamation marks in lines 1 and 5 are celebratory – there are survivors. The exclamation mark in line 8 brings a sense of sorrow and shock. So many died in the shipwreck.

(2)

12.4.2 What does the phrase 'scant salvation' (line 5) suggest?

(2)

Although forty people perished in the storm, there were at least four survivors. Scant refers to few. It could also imply that the celebration of those who survived will be tainted by the loss of so many others/ only a few managed to survive.

12.4.3 Refer to line 13. "...silence suffuses the story".

Critically comment on the tone in these lines.

The tone is sombre/melancholic/depressed. The storyteller is feeling sad when they relive the events of the story of the death of the forty people who died in the shipwreck and the sadness of them having lost loved ones there is nothing to say about this loss.

(3)

12.4.4 In what way, do you think, this poem, written two centuries ago, could still resonate with readers today?

Own answer. [While we have fewer ships sinking today, the 21<sup>st</sup> century is not immune to disasters of epic proportions. Think of the 9/11 bombings and the stories of these survivors. In fact, the first line of the poem seems apt now: "the great storm is over" and we are happy to get back to normal after the Covid pandemic. However, many of us lost loved ones or suffered in ways because of lockdown. Think about some of the stories we will tell our children.]

[Mark valid answers. Stories documenting tragedies where there were still survivors.]

(3)  
[10]

Always start in the moderate category. Move down if the learner shows little to no understanding; move up as they start discussing the topic and mentioning relevant points.

SECTION A: Assessment rubric for literary essay: Poetry (10 Marks)

| Criteria  | Exceptional<br>5-6  | Skilful<br>4   | Moderate<br>3  | Elementary<br>2  | Inadequate<br>0-1   |
|---|---|--|--|--|---|
| <b>CONTENT</b><br><b>6 MARKS</b><br>Interpretation of topic. Depth of argument, justification and grasp of text.                        | -In-depth interpretation of topic<br>-Range of striking arguments; extensively supported from poem<br>-Excellent understanding of genre and poem  | -Shows understanding and has interpreted topic well<br>-Fairly detailed response given, but not all of them as well motivated as they could be<br>-Understanding of genre and poem | -Fair interpretation of topic<br>-Some good points in support of topic<br>-Some arguments supported, but evidence is not always convincing<br>-Basic understanding of genre and poem | -Unsatisfactory interpretation of topic<br>-Hardly any points in support of topic<br>-Inadequate understanding of genre and poem   | -No understanding of the topic<br>-No reference to the poem<br>-Learner has not come to grips with genre and poem |
| <b>STRUCTURE AND LANGUAGE</b><br><b>4 MARKS</b><br>Structure, logical flow and presentation. Language, tone and style used in the essay | -Coherent structure<br>-Arguments well-structured and clearly developed<br>-Language, tone and style mature, impressive, correct<br>-Virtually error-free grammar, spelling and punctuation | -Clear structure and logical flow of argument<br>-Flow of argument can be followed<br>-Language, tone and style largely correct  | -Some evidence of structure<br>-Essay lacks a well-structured flow of logic and coherence<br>-Language errors minor; tone and style mostly appropriate                               | -Structure shows faulty planning<br>-Arguments not logically arranged<br>-Language errors evident<br>-Inappropriate tone and style | -Poorly structured<br>-Serious language errors and incorrect style  |

NOTE: If a candidate has ignored the content completely and written a creative response instead, award a 0 mark for both Content and Structure and Language.

No mention of first person; contractions or past tense

A MAXIMUM of FOUR structural errors (first person; contractions or past tense)

[10]

| CRITERIA   | EXCEPTIONAL   | SKILFUL  | MODERATE   | ELEMENTARY  | INADEQUATE  |
|--|---|--|--|---|---|
| <p><b>CONTENT</b></p> <p>Interpretation of topic. Depth of argument, justification and grasp of text.</p> <p><b>15 MARKS</b></p>                             | <p><b>12 – 15</b></p> <p>Outstanding response: 14–15<br/>Excellent response: 12–13<br/>In-depth interpretation of topic<br/>Range of striking arguments extensively supported from text<br/>Excellent understanding of genre and text</p> | <p><b>9 – 11</b></p> <p>Shows understanding and has interpreted topic well<br/>Fairly detailed response<br/>Some sound arguments given, but not all of them as well motivated as they could be<br/>Understanding of genre and text evident</p> | <p><b>6 – 8</b></p> <p>Mediocre interpretation of topic; not all aspects explored in detail<br/>Some good points in support of topic<br/>Some arguments supported, but evidence is not always convincing<br/>Partial understanding</p>                   | <p><b>4 – 5</b></p> <p>Scant interpretation of topic; hardly any aspects explored in detail<br/>Few points in support of topic<br/>Very little relevant argument<br/>Little understanding of genre and text</p> | <p><b>0 – 3</b></p> <p>Very little understanding of the topic<br/>Weak attempt to answer the question<br/>Arguments not convincing<br/>Candidate has not come to grips with genre or text</p> |
| <p><b>STRUCTURE AND LANGUAGE</b></p> <p>Structure, logical flow and presentation.<br/>Language, tone and style used in the essay.</p> <p><b>10 MARKS</b></p> | <p><b>8 – 10</b></p> <p>Coherent structure<br/>Excellent introduction and conclusion<br/>Arguments well-structured and clearly developed<br/>Language, tone and style mature, impressive, correct</p>                                     | <p><b>6 – 7</b></p> <p>Clear structure and logical flow of argument<br/>Introduction and conclusion and other paragraphs coherently organised<br/>Logical flow of argument<br/>Language, tone and style largely correct</p>                    | <p><b>4 – 5</b></p> <p>Mediocre interpretation of topic; not all aspects explored in detail<br/>Some good points in support of topic<br/>Some arguments supported, but evidence is not always convincing<br/>Partial understanding of genre and text</p> | <p><b>2 – 3</b></p> <p>Scant interpretation of topic; hardly any aspects explored in detail<br/>Few points in support of topic<br/>Very little relevant argument<br/>Little understanding of genre and text</p> | <p><b>0 – 1</b></p> <p>Very little understanding of the topic<br/>Weak attempt to answer the question<br/>Arguments not convincing<br/>Candidate has not come to grips with genre or text</p> |

**UNSEEN POETRY (COMPULSORY)**

**13 THE ABANDONED MINE – Charles Claybrook Wollacot**

13.1 Account for the use of the word, 'abandoned' in the title and line 1 of the poem.

The mine is in a derelict condition. It is empty/deserted/uninhabited/vacant. It is no longer a productive mine.

[Award 2 marks for two distinct points.] (2)

13.2 Refer to lines 5–8: 'Here is the ... more come back!'

Identify and explain the tone conveyed in these lines.

The tone is nostalgic. There is a yearning/longing for a time when the mine was busy and the mine was productive.

OR

The tone is sad and regretful at the loss of the workers who died toiling in the mine/the loss of livelihood and the impact this has had on communities reliant on mining.

[Award 1 mark for the identification of tone and 1 mark for the explanation.] (2)

13.3 Refer to lines 9–12: 'Time, with slow ... of men's toil.'

13.3.1 Identify the figure of speech in these lines.

Personification. (1)

13.3.2 Comment on how this image adds meaning to the poem.

The image implies that over time, the earth will be restored and will resume its natural state. There will be little evidence that a mine was ever there. Time is depicted as a force that is mightier than mankind's pursuits.

[Award 2 marks only if a comment is made.] (2)

13.4 Refer to lines 13–14: 'And this the ... hopes buried lie.'

Critically discuss how the diction in these lines contributes to the central idea of the poem. Your response should include TWO examples of diction.

The poem's central idea is that nature endures while human beings' endeavours do not. Despite the hard work undertaken by men to accomplish their ambitions ('hopes'), their endeavours are ultimately futile. 'Mound' refers to the mine dump that is created when digging for the precious resources. This becomes a 'grave', suggesting not only the possible loss of miners' lives but also their dreams of enriching themselves which have died and been 'buried'. Their initial optimism has been dashed as they have not extracted the riches they anticipated finding.

[Accept valid alternative responses.]

[Award 3 marks for a critical discussion of the central idea, supported by TWO examples of diction.]

(3)

**14 THE CLOTHES – Mongane Wally Serote**

14.1 Refer to lines 5–6: 'The shoes rested ... they were new.'

What impression is created of the person to whom the shoes belonged?

The owner of the shoes was always busy and active and never rested./The owner was poor as this might have been the only pair of shoes he owned./The owner is dead and the shoes are now resting.

[Award 2 marks for one distinct point.]

(2)

14.2 Refer to lines 3–4: 'The shoes I ... window crying dew'.

Explain how the mood is created in these lines.

The sombre/bleak/mournful/sorrowful mood is created by the word, 'crying'. The sense of loss is reinforced by the fact that the speaker knew the deceased so intimately.

[Award 1 mark for the identification of the mood and 1 mark for an explanation.]

(2)

14.3 Comment on the speaker's personifying the clothing throughout the poem.

The speaker personifies the items of clothing as 'crying reddish water', the jacket as having a 'body' and the trousers having 'one hip'. This reinforces the absence of the man who has died. By referring to the clothes and not the person, the speaker wants to remain detached from the trauma of the violent death. By not identifying the owner of the clothes, the universal suffering of victims and the commonplace nature of such crime are highlighted.

[Award 3 marks for two ideas well developed.]

(3)

14.4 Refer to stanza 4: 'The over-sized black ... hoping to hope.'

Critically discuss how this stanza conveys the central message of the poem.

The central message of the poem is that life in this environment has very little value for the people who live there. Death is such a common occurrence that the speaker views the clothes as a hanging dead body; this emphasises how people are dehumanised. 'Tired of hoping to hope' conveys a sense of pessimism/despondency/despair. He feels that this environment is harsh/unforgiving/dangerous, emphasising his sense of hopelessness.

[Credit responses that interpret the poem within a political context.]

[Award 3 marks for a critical discussion.]

(3)

[10]

## 15 AFRICAN GRASS – Shimmer Chinodya

15.1 What does the word, 'laden' (line 4) suggest about the dew?

The word 'laden' suggests that there is a great deal of moisture which is weighing down the grass.

[Award 2 marks for one distinct idea.]

(2)

15.2 Refer to lines 8–10: 'Grass caressing my ... softly / like lovers.'

Explain what these lines convey about the speaker's attitude toward the grass.

The speaker feels a close connection to nature; it has a soothing/calming effect on him. The lines suggest that the movement of the grass is gentle and the grass sways rhythmically. The word, 'rustling' suggests that the grass also makes a muted sound as the speaker disturbs it by walking through it.

[Award 1 mark for the speaker's attitude and 1 mark for the explanation.]

(2)

15.3 Refer to lines 24–26: 'This whispering / Shall be / Gone.'

Discuss how the length of these lines reinforces the speaker's tone.

The length of the lines decreases/diminishes. This reinforces the regretful/sorrowful/mournful tone of the speaker. He realises that the grass will eventually be destroyed. He will no longer be able to appreciate it and it will no longer bring him joy.

[Award 1 mark for a reference to line length, 1 mark for tone and 1 mark for the discussion.]

(3)

15.4 With close reference to stanza 3 (lines 15–23), comment on the speaker's observations about the cycle of nature.

The contradiction between 'green and succulent' grass and 'black and burnt plains' captures the idea that the cycle of nature is about the rejuvenation that occurs after destruction. All life must come to an end so that new life can begin. The oxymoron ('Fruitless growth') suggests that, despite the renewal, there is a pointlessness to this repetitive cycle of nature as nothing lasts.

[Credit valid alternative responses.]

[Award 3 marks only if a comment is made.]

(3)

**[10]**

**16 LIVING SPACE – Imtiaz Dharker**

16.1 Refer to lines 1–7: 'There are just ... off the vertical.'

What impression of the building is created in these lines?

The lines describe a rickety and ramshackle dwelling. The beams are perilously balanced and it seems as if the entire structure might collapse at any moment. The building is crudely and haphazardly constructed from a variety of ill-fitting materials.

[Award 2 marks for any two relevant and distinct points.]

(2)

16.2 Refer to lines 9–10: 'The whole structure ... towards the miraculous.'

Discuss the use of the word, 'miraculous' in the context of the poem.

The word, 'miraculous' conveys the speaker's amazement/wonder that the house, despite its precarious construction, continues to stand./Despite the dangerous nature of the structure, the occupants have faith that the building will remain standing and continue to provide them with shelter.

[Award 2 marks for one idea fully discussed.]

(2)

16.3 Refer to line 8: 'Nails clutch at open seams.'

Comment on the effectiveness of the image in the above line.

'Clutch' implies that the nails are holding on tightly, almost in a desperate attempt to keep the structure together and stop it from falling apart. The phrase, 'open seams' however, emphasises how flimsy the building is and how tenuous the grip of the nails actually is. The image is effective as it shows how precarious life is for the people who live in these buildings; they are so desperate for shelter that they will use whatever materials they can find to fashion some sort of home for themselves.

[Award 3 marks for two ideas well discussed.]

(3)

16.4 Despite the uncertainty of life in these circumstances, the poem offers hope for the future.

Do you agree with this statement? Justify your response with reference to the final stanza.

AGREE. The inhabitants of the shelter take a risk in bringing the eggs into a space where they might easily be destroyed. The 'eggs' represent new life; their potential to provide sustenance or to hatch is suggested in 'gathering the light/into themselves'. This implies that the residents are optimistic/hopeful that things will change for the better, if not for them, then for the next generation. The phrase, 'the bright, thin walls of faith' illustrates how the people are prepared to believe in a brighter future, no matter how flimsy/futile their hopes might be.

(3)

[A cogent 'Disagree' response is unlikely. However, treat all responses on their merits.]

[Award 3 marks for any two ideas well discussed.]

[10]

## 17 NETTLES<sup>1</sup> – Vernon Scannell

- 17.1 The nettles appear to be cruel/ruthless/malicious. Their sharpness is vicious and inflicts pain. This 'bed' of nettles causes discomfort; an idea not generally associated with a comfortable bed.

[Award 2 marks for two relevant and distinct points.]

(2)

- 17.2 The speaker hates/despises the nettles and wants to burn them to remove all evidence of their existence and the reminder of the pain they inflicted on his son. The nettles are like soldiers that he has killed and their bodies need to be cremated.

[Candidates might refer to the 'funeral pyre' being lit as part of a ritual to honour the 'fallen dead' which would imply that the speaker's attitude might be respectful of a defeated enemy.]

[Award 2 marks only if the speaker's attitude is discussed.]

(2)

- 17.3 The sun and the rain are compared to military authorities: these natural elements encourage the new growth of nettles just as army generals enlist new recruits. The image is effective because the speaker perceives the nettles as the relentless enemy which will continue to be a threat to his son.

[Award 3 marks only if the image is well-discussed.]

(3)

- 17.4 Initially, the speaker views his role as that of nurturer as he 'soothed' his son's pain. The expression, 'slashed in fury' suggests that he is determined to protect his son from harm. He thinks his actions will be enough to make the world a safer place for his son. However, he realises that pain and suffering are unavoidable ('My son would often feel sharp wounds again.') and despite his best efforts, his son will still be vulnerable to the harshness of the world.

[Award 3 marks only if a critical comment is made.]

(3)

[10]