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Candidate Style Answers with commentary

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ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE (EMC)

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INTRODUCTION

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Exemplars of actual examination scripts will be provided when they are available after the first examination series.

As these responses have not been through a full standardisation and moderation process, they have not been given a final mark or a grade. Instead they are presented as 'high level' responses that clearly demonstrate features of a Level 6 response. Please also refer to the marking criteria in the A level Language and Literature Sample Assessment Materials when reading these 'candidate style answers'.

Please note that this resource is provided as guidance only and does not constitute an indication of endorsed answers or grading.



QUESTION 1: WILLIAM BLAKE, *THE GARDEN OF LOVE*

Question: Explore how William Blake presents freedom and control in *The Garden of Love* and make connections with one or two other poems from your collection.

You should consider Blake's use of poetic and stylistic techniques and significant literary or other contexts.

The illustration to this poem from *The Songs of Experience* shows the words being surrounded and entrapped by the vines and briars that mark the edge of the page. It is a visual clue to the repeated images of restriction that run through this poem.¹

1. AO3 Establishing paragraph, integrating original way in which the text was produced, with an overview of the poem's meaning

Therefore, while the title and even the rhyme scheme may at first seem to echo Blake's characteristic preoccupation with childhood innocence and the freedom of thought that goes with it, it quickly becomes clear that it is the authoritarian control that wins out in the end.

From the start, perhaps, the definite article of the title might suggest a reference to that other garden that once was perfect and free and that then became corrupted and subject to divine control: the Garden of Eden. This is not "a" garden, this is "the" garden, and the capital letter tells us about its function as a proper noun. **This is a place that is both known to us as the Biblical garden, and also to the persona who enters it in the first line. Despite the negative connotations of the Garden of Eden,²** the content of the first line appears positive; after all, the use of the first person narrator and the past tense "went" create an impression that this has actually happened, and that the place actually exists.

2. AO3 Exploration of literary context with reference to the question

The use of the plu-perfect tense in "never had seen" confirms the idea of familiarity that the persona has with the garden: they have done this before. However, the adverb "never" marks the change in tone as the persona sees that organised religion (symbolised in the image of the chapel) has been imposed upon this place of play and innocence. **This was "the green" that represents (in *Nurse's Song* and in *The Ecchoing Green*, for example) unrestricted freedom, where children play till they are ready for rest and till the light fades away.³** In contrast, in *The Garden of Love*, the pastoral idyll is confined to the past in the verb-phrase "used to": it is something that happened repeatedly, but it does not happen any more.

3. AO4 Apt connections with two other poems



In the first two verses, there is a balance in lexical patterns between those associated with freedom (“the Garden”, “play”, “flowers”) and those associated with repression, control, industrialisation and established religion (“the Chapel”, “built”, “gates” and “door”)⁴ The nouns “gates” and “door” could represent either freedom or repression (as open doors and gates suggest opportunities or a different future, perhaps), but here, as the person turns to *The Garden of Love*, this is not the case. It is clear that as well as signifying the controlling power of the authorities shutting people out, the door and gates are also signalling an inability to return to the past of childhood innocence and play. The final verse confirms this. The lexical patterns are now linked by death (“graves”, “tombstones”, “black”).

Like the illustration, the priests dominate this verse, and Blake has chosen the imperfect tense “were walking” to suggest that this is an on-going process. All the other verbs in the poem are fixed and unchanging: they are either confined to the past (“used to”) or have been completed. The chapel has already been built; the gates are already shut; the words have already been written over the door by the time the persona sees them. The use of the passive voice in “was built” and “was filled” increases the feeling that this has been done by an anonymous almost secretive force.⁵ It is not until we reach the final verse that we see representatives of this controlling force: the priests. Amid this scene of stillness and death, they are free to move and the dynamic verbs “walking” and “binding” emphasise this power.

This poem gives us an image of an inflexible, all-controlling authority in the words above the door of the chapel: “Thou Shalt Not”. Unlike the dialogue in *Nurse’s Song*, where the children appeal to the Nurse’s request to come home, and are allowed to continue playing, this use of direct speech in the quote from *The Bible* is fixed and unchanging. No one can argue back here. The deviation from the first person narrative and the use of capitals emphasises the controlling power of these words. **The equal stress that lands on all three is then echoed in the lexical repetition of the conjunction “and”, which increases in frequency throughout the poem until the final verse when it marks the start of every line.**⁶ While it may appear syntactically slightly childlike, it also visually suggests the all-consuming presence and control of established religion as the priests walk their rounds and religious rules are enforced.

While “and” insistently starts every line in the final verse, the rhyme scheme that has echoed that of Isaac Watt’s hymns throughout the rest of the poem, breaks down as the poem ends.⁷ It is as though the freedom has been now finally repressed. The internal half-rhyme of “gowns” and “rounds”, “briars” and “desires” has the function of alerting the reader to these words, as we question how, for example, the abstract “desire” can be bound by the concrete “briar”. Nor do the priests walk in any direction: like the briars in the illustration, they turn endlessly in circles. They are the force of established religion that restricts and controls the freedom of love and joy.

The verb “play” that is so essential in symbolising childlike innocence in *The Ecchoing Green* and *Nurse’s Song* was suggested in the first verse of *The Garden of Love*, but has been replaced in the final verse by the verbs of “walking” and “binding”.⁸ Even the sound within *The Ecchoing Green* (the bells, the singing birds, the laughing) and in *Nurse’s Song* (voices, laughing, shouting) is completely absent from *The Garden of Love*. There is no voice of a nurse, or the laugh of Old John; just a written quote from *The Bible* and silent, faceless priests.

4. AO2 Use of stylistic analysis to support a coherent interpretation of the poem as a whole

5. AO1 Uses vocabulary and terminology effectively, in a fluent and developed expression of ideas about the tense choice

6. AO2 AO1 Use of stylistic and poetic analysis to support an interpretation about the way in which the syntax enhances the meaning of the poem

7. AO3 Reference to other contexts that may have affected the poem’s production

8. AO4 AO1 Interesting connections between the poems’ verbs, indicating an ability to select significant stylistic features



The complete annihilation of any freedom is emphasised, too, by the deviation in the rhythm in the last two lines. The light rhythm may be similar to that of *Nurse's Song*, but the significance lies in the change from the rhythm in the rest of the poem. **The move to a tetrameter, and the adding of two extra syllables seems to confirm the way in which the priests, as symbols of established religion and of the adult world, have taken over from the childlike freedom that still echoed in the first verse. In that destruction, they have then imposed their laws, and taken control of emotions: "binding with briars my joys & desires".⁹**

9. AO2 AO1 Effective use of poetic and stylistic analysis in a strong, concluding paragraph

A very strong response, with a coherent argument, that closely follows the question and integrates and demonstrates knowledge of two other poems as well as of the wider context. Stylistic and poetic terminology is applied aptly.



QUESTION 2: EMILY DICKINSON, *IT WAS NOT DEATH, FOR I STOOD UP*

Question: Explore how Emily Dickinson presents ideas and feelings about despair in *It was not Death, for I stood up* and make connections with one or two other poems from your collection.

You should consider Dickinson's use of poetic and stylistic techniques and significant literary or other relevant contexts.

From the first word of this poem (the anaphoric pronoun "it") the reader is forced to search for meaning. In fact, the reader is denied the noun that is attached to the pronoun for another twenty four lines, and it is not until the final line that we learn that it refers to "despair".¹

The poem may open with a declarative sentence that suggests a certainty, but it quickly becomes clear that the readers are not being given any straightforward answers: they are just being told what 'it' (despair) is *not*. **The whole poem, characteristic of Dickinson's poems of definition, is an attempt to capture and question an abstract quality or experience, which, in this case, is despair.**² This is not simple, the poem seems to suggest, and the devices (poetic, structural and grammatical) that Dickinson uses, are similarly complex. The subordinating conjunction "as if", the use of similes (such as "'twas like Midnight"), and the stative verb "reminded" all support this idea of approximation; that the persona is struggling to express something that is almost inexpressible.

The certainty in the first verse, then, comes from the parallelism of the phrases "It was not Death" "It was not Night". The speaker, in the first person, states that her physical experiences (of standing up and of hearing the bells) prove that she is not dead, and that it is not night. However, the fact that we have been shown these words, means that their qualities still remain. Despair is not death or night, but it carries with it the qualities of darkness, grief, stillness and cold.

The subordinating conjunction "for" is repeated four times, and serves the function of proving that despair is not these things. Despite the fact that there are lexical patterns of "Death" "Dead" "Night" "frost" and "flesh" which are linked by their associations with cold and mortality, there is an element of life in the first verse with the image of the childish bells who "put out their tongues".³ This idiomatic, verbal phrase is the only light-hearted aspect of the poem. In a similar way to "The Soul has Bandaged moments-" where there are the oppositions of despair and elation, the first verse contains life and activity; (the persona can stand up; she can hear the bells, and the bells have "tongues" which connote speech and song), but by the second verse this personal engagement is draining away. The undercurrents of despair are building as the verb choice to describe the warm winds or Siroccos is "crawl", making them seem insect-like and invasive, and there is an increasing sense that the persona is disconnected from her body, with her cold "Marble feet". Marble connotes the paleness of death, and it absorbs all heat and radiates none. **In "After great pain", despair similarly causes a separation of mind and body: the only way to deal with this extreme emotion is to distance yourself and to allow your feet to move, even if they are directionless and "mechanical, go round".⁴**

1. AO1 AO2 Use of stylistic analysis to introduce the approach to the question

2. AO3 Perceptive understanding of the wider characteristics of Dickinson's poems, applied aptly to the focus poem

3. AO2 AO1 Application of stylistic analysis to explore the way in which meaning is created within this poem

4. AO4 Selected reference to "After great pain"; used to highlight the meaning of "It was not Death"



In verse three of "It was not Death" the choice of the verb "tasted" is the last sense that the persona mentions. It marks a structural turning point in the poem where the persona no longer has any control over despair. From line 11, the emotion takes over, and the persona no longer acts, but is acted upon, as seen for example in verse four, where the passive voice is used in "were shaven//And fitted". There is no subject for these verbs, and it makes it seem all the more sinister that there is an anonymous force affecting the speaker. Again, in the verb phrase "could not breathe" which refers back to "my life", (even if it were possible for an abstract noun to breathe), we then learn that it cannot do this without a key, a key that is presumably held by or operated by someone else. In "The Soul has Bandaged moments-" we can see these lexical patterns of imprisonment and restrictions again, as the soul is "shackled".

The archaic form of "twas" is the last implied reference we have to the persona and the unassigned floating pronoun "some" which is followed by a dash, completes the sense that despair is now governing and taking over the persona. The grammatical structure and the words themselves are fragmenting and breaking down.

In the final two verses the tense changes and it almost seems as though the poet has found the answer to what despair is. This is no longer just about her despair, but about the despair of the adjectival noun "most" in the final verse, which suggests that she is now expressing a common human emotion. The present tense implies that this is a truth that does not just apply to a specific event in the past, but to all those in the future who experience despair.

The dashes that are so characteristic of Dickinson's poetry are everywhere in the final two verses. There are eighteen in the whole poem, and eleven of those are in the last eight lines. They mark the lines like the heart beats in line 20, or the ticking universe in line 17. **In this poem, where Dickinson uses the common metre that is so typical of her writing (and of the hymns that may well have influenced her writing), the dash works to control the pace, and to force the reader to experience the paralysing nature of despair before the words "has stopped", for example.**⁵

5. AO3 AO4

Demonstration of knowledge of characteristic features of Dickinson's poetry, and of the wider context of the poems' production

The dash after line 18 highlights the void that exists as despair dominates, and even space "stares" vacantly. This is echoed, too, in "The Soul has Bandaged moments-" where Fright, looking in the first verse, is replaced by the figure of Horror welcoming the soul in the final verse, and the terror of despair at this recapture finishes with a dash. Like "After great pain", the dash suggests a lack of resolution. In "The Soul has Bandaged moments-" that lack of resolution may be that despair will return and that the cycle will continue, and in "After great pain" it suggests a tailing away or a "letting go" of grief and despair to either hope or death.

In the penultimate verse of "It was not Death", the world has stopped as the frosts "Repeal the Beating Ground", and time has stopped, as it does in the "Hour of Lead" in "After great pain". The euphoria of the soul "who swings upon the Hours" with its unbroken, iambic rhythm is nowhere to be seen in "It was not Death". Despair has been symbolised by the landscape, by space, and finally by the seascape. **The lexical patterns of cold and dark return in the image of space and frost, but the last four lines perhaps most acutely illustrate Dickinson's own terror of 1861.**⁶ Commas and dashes break the lines apart, forcing the reader to stumble through the words: "But, most, like Chaos – Stopless – cool- " **Any control over despair has been relinquished in the image of the solitary boat, adrift in an endless sea, with no "Chance or spar".**⁶

6. AO3 Knowledge of the context of the poem's production is integrated into an analysis of the meaning

This is an elegant answer that neatly integrates poetic and stylistic analysis in order to explore the way in which meaning is created in the text. The essay demonstrates a knowledge of Dickinson's poetry generally, as well as an understanding of the wider context of these poems, in a fully-developed, well-written piece of critical analysis.



QUESTION 3: SEAMUS HEANEY, *ANAHORISH*

Question: Explore how Seamus Heaney presents thoughts and feelings about place in *Anahorish* and make connections with one or two other poems from your collection.

You should consider Heaney's use of poetic and stylistic techniques and significant literary or other relevant contexts.

Heaney names the place in the title of the poem and it seems uncomplicated, and that he is definitely writing about a place that actually exists. However, as with many of Heaney's poems, naming the place is anything but simple. It raises cultural, political and historical issues that are relevant both to the speaker, and to the Irish nation.¹

For the English readers, perhaps this title is a series of sounds with no meaning, but for the Gaelic reader this name is an Anglicisation of the Gaelic. It does not literally mean "Place of clear water", and the fact that the speaker of the poem uses this translation suggests that he is making it his own or colonising it as the English historically did. **The possessive pronoun "my" in the first line re-enforces this idea. Perhaps, reflective of the fact that Heaney split his time between America and Ireland, the speaker writes as an outsider, Anglicising and recapturing the place in words.²**

Typically, Heaney is echoing an Irish tradition here of *dinnshenchas*, which are poems written about place names. In the first verse, we see the way in which the place and language are so tightly fused. The phonetic parallelism of the repeated sibilance of the first verse ("place" "first" "springs" "washed" "shiny" "grass") creates the sense of the water throughout. This has an Edenic feel to it, with the waters purifying on the "first hill in the world". The repeated lexical patterns are evident here, associated with clarity and newness ("clear" "washed" "shiny").

Unlike the title, which contains some of the history of the place, the first verse focuses on the individual's emotional relationship with the place's topography: we know that there is a grassy hill and that there is a spring. However, the lack of verb between the title and the first line ("is" is deliberately omitted) firmly links the two. This is not a place that is just geographical, it is also important to the individual, and has political and historical connections to a nation.

This is typical of Heaney's poetry: the speaker in *Punishment* may consider himself to be distanced and an "artful voyeur", for example, but the vision of ancient tribal brutality in the figure of the murdered girl, leaves him seeing the connections with the contemporary brutality in Northern Ireland. In both *Punishment* and *Strange Fruit* the body has become part of the land, (the head is, for example, described as a "gourd" with a "wet fern" of hair), and it has become part of the speaker's culture and history.³

1. AO1 AO3 AO4 The opening paragraph ambitiously makes links to Heaney's other poems, while introducing the wider context of the politicisation of the naming of place names in Ireland by the English

2. AO2 AO3 Stylistic analysis leads to a reflection about the relevance of the wider context of this poem's production

3. AO3 AO4 Telling use is made of context outside the poems in order to further the analysis of what "place" means in these poems



The hiatus and verse break after “grass” in the first verse of *Anahorish* seems to suggest this movement from an individual relationship with and memories of the place, through to something that is wider reaching. The lack of end-stopped line may, however, imply that this is not a complete fracture, but there is a clear change in tone. **The lexical patterns are dimming in the adjective “darkened” and the metaphorical “bed” of the lane. We seem to be sinking into a dream-like liminal space.**⁴

4. AO1 AO2 A wide vocabulary is evident here (as elsewhere), and fluently integrated into a poetic and stylistic analysis of this verse

In verse two this is emphasised. This is the verse that is not in the present: it is not the speaker recollecting his own child-like vision of it, and it is not a description of the past with which the poem closes. This second verse works as a bridge, emphasising, like *Strange Fruit* and *Punishment*, the continuity of human experience. The final two lines define and examine not so much the etymology of the name, as Dinnsheenas have done before, but the feel and form of the word itself. It is not fixed in a tense because there is no verb. It is, however, broken and fragmented by three commas, and the graphological deviation of italicisation further draws attention to the word itself. The speaker’s engagement with it is sensual: in his use of synaesthesia he feels the “soft” consonant and even sees the angle of it (the “gradient”). The compound “vowel-meadow” inextricably links place and word. The word *Anahorish* defines it geographically and historically and even politically in the poem and the words recreate the place again.

The comma at the end of line eight implies a link with the images that follow, but we quickly realise that we are now in an imagined history. As in *Punishment* where the speaker projects himself back to the moment of the ancient punishment of the girl, so here verse three and verse four move into the past.⁵

5. AO1 AO4 Interesting connections made with “Punishment” – perhaps a more explicit link with the question needed here

Anahorish is a place where memories are held, whether they are individual or national. The compound words “vowel-meadow” and “after-image” usually link the two, but the flowing three line description marks a more lyrical tone, and the final five line sentence echoes the six line sentence of the first verse, almost as though the individual place, interrupted by the speaker’s observations on the name itself, is then mirrored in the shared, historical place of the mound-dwellers. There are lexical echoes as well in the springs that have now been directed by man into “wells”, and the onomatopoeic “washed” in the first verse echoed in the onomatopoeic verb “break”.

As in the final lines of *Strange Fruit* where the verb “outstaring” no longer seems to be in the past, so here, the tense changes. This creates a sense of immediacy, as the mound-dwellers “go” and “break”. The “after-image” of the lamps refers both to the physical effect of the light, but also to the idea that (like the bodies in *Strange Fruit* and *Punishment*), this place holds the present, a recent past, and an ancient past within it.

The form is regular with a double stressed line that is similar to *Punishment*, suggesting that these are memories that have been recollected consciously and carefully. It is a recurrent theme in Heaney’s poetry as he examines a place (or, as in *Strange Fruit* and *Punishment* a body that has become part of a place), and so raises questions about language, about history and about identity. The more we question and explore the idea of place, the speaker seems to suggest, the more that we will discover about our own identities.⁶

6. AO1 AO4 AO3 Similar to the opening paragraph, this concluding paragraph ambitiously attempts to pull together the three poems, a reiteration of the wider political context, and an overview of the argument and its relevance to the question of place

This essay reveals a sound knowledge of the context of these poems, and an ability to weave together stylistic and poetic analysis into what is a convincing argument about Heaney’s presentation of place. The vocabulary is wide, and the selection of the details from the poems is thoughtful and illuminating in terms of what it reveals about the way in which meaning is produced in *Anahorish* itself.



QUESTION 4: EAVAN BOLAND, *OBJECT LESSONS*

Question: Explore how Eavan Boland presents ideas about change in *Object Lessons* and make connections with one or two other poems from your collection.

You should consider Boland's use of poetic and stylistic techniques and significant literary or other relevant contexts.

Object Lessons holds in tension ideas of change and stasis, in the personal and domestic but also in history. Boland achieves this through embedding the narrative of a hunting scene on a mug into the narrative of a relationship, taking place at a particular time in 20th century Irish history. Through the poem, the unchanging scene on the mug opens up the possibility of change – both for the better and worse: a “bright” history without “suffering” is contemplated but also a “shiver/of presentiment” is provoked.¹

The poem opens with the domestic: a couple unpacking in a new house, a cup of coffee made, the difference between this homely scene and the “cruel theatre” of the hunting scene on the mug acknowledged and perhaps mocked by being put into the bracketed aside, its rhetorical flourish at odds with the conversational tone. By the end of the poem the mug will be broken, the hunting scene in pieces; there will be a sense too that not only has time passed (in the October evenings and shared coffees) but so too has the relationship.²

By the second verse in *Object Lessons*, the focus has shifted, moving inwards to the scene painted on “Your” “coffee mug”. The setting has moved from domestic realism, to pastoral idyll. The coffee mug and kettle have been replaced by pitchers of wine, and the speaker and her partner have been replaced by a lady and a huntsman. Like the opening stanza the second is dominated by minor sentences. Where the first is reflective and conversational, creating the impression of a memory being recreated, the second paints a picture through the nouns. The lack of finite verbs, the discrete nouns (or noun phrases) create a sense that the hunting scene is out of time, not subject to change. Like Keats’ “Ode On a Grecian Urn”, this is a fixed, image of apparent perfection: the thrush will always “be ready to sing”, the linen laid out, ready for the picnic to be enjoyed.³

The move into the present tense in the fourth line of stanza three (“the way land looks”) signals a pulling back from the scene, a change from describing it to reflecting on its significance. It is an ambiguous shift: on the one hand, it suggests an untroubled time, a land (unlike Ireland in the 70s and 80s) in which “suffering” is not a habit. It is a pastoral idyll. On the other hand, the very fact that ideas of “disaster” and “suffering” have been introduced into the stanza disturbs the idyll. There is a sense that disaster is anticipated – as though we are looking at a land in the moment before “disaster strikes”.³

1. AO1 AO3 A confident introduction, showing understanding of significant concepts, and the poem in its historical context

2. AO1 A coherent conceptual overview, developing a fluent analysis with effective use of vocabulary and terminology

3. AO1 AO2 AO3 Effective stylistic analysis, exploring imagery, lexis and grammar to sustain a coherent interpretation. Analysis furthered with reference to relevant literary and historical contexts



But the sentence does not end with the stanza break between stanzas 3 and 4. The form of the poem captures the tension between the stillness and timeless perfection of the hunting scene and the inevitable forward movement of history: the enjambment across stanzas contrasts with the self-enclosed sestets with their mirrored rhyme scheme, bringing together movement and stasis.⁴

In the gap between stanzas 3 and 4, we move from the pastoral still life on a mug to the speaker's experience of a 'land' and a 'history', the enjambment connecting the two, perhaps allowing for the possibility that in real life too there might be such an untroubled land.

For half of stanzas 4 and 5, the reader, like the persona, contemplates the possibility of a "history" previously 'unknown' to us. Here Boland really exploits the power of poetry to do two things at once. The version of history 'opened up' by the "hunting scene" on the mug is described through two domestic snapshots: 'bright' 'as our curtainless October nights' or mornings of 'shared cake'. At the same time, these similes return the poem to the specific, domestic reality of stanza 1 – we share in the passage of the speaker's life.⁵

The 'chaos' of the kitchen, foregrounded through its position at the beginning of the line, anticipates the shift in the speaker's interpretation of the hunting scene. Where once the mug was a pastoral untroubled by 'disaster', opening up a brighter alternative, now it is a 'veiled warning'. With this change, the pace of the poem also changes, the momentum building: where the minor and single word sentences in stanzas 2 and 3 created the impression of stasis, the hunting scene suspended out of time, it is now very much in time, found shattered on the still unvarnished floor. It provokes a "shiver of presentiment". But of what exactly?⁵

Asking this takes one back to the title *Object Lessons* – what is the lesson? What has been learned? It seems that in this poem, the object – the mug with its hunting scene – takes on a symbolic value in the life of the speaker, associated with a new beginning, the shared passage of time, reflection on a country's troubled past and the possibility of an alternative in which "suffering" is not a habit. Even though the scene is idealized and unreal, the discovery of it broken somehow challenges the possibility of this change – or warns of a threat to the domestic harmony (as the pronouns "you and I" replace the "we" and "us").

Boland uses domestic settings in several other poems, such as *Woman in the Kitchen*, which, like *Object Lessons* is full of ordinary objects and everyday scenes – kettles boiling, toasters and tumble driers, cups and sideboards. But, as with *Object Lessons*, these scenes are anything but mundane. Under the surface there is always a tension or sense of something deeper going on. In *Object Lessons* the meditation is on change; in *Woman in the Kitchen* there is the lexis of death and burial, signalling the way in which everyday life for a woman can be like a living death. In both of these poems there is an abundance of concrete nouns of domestic life but they are juxtaposed with words from more abstract lexical fields, and from the natural world – "lunar", "tropic", "kingfisher", "river". Many of Boland's poems consider the ordinary twentieth century world alongside a pastoral past in order to explore whether, as she says in *The New Pastoral* we are now in a "pastoral chaos" or whether one could be "happy here", "more than a refugee". In *Object Lessons*, the shattering of the mug perhaps suggests not.⁶

This is an excellent critical analysis, showing a fully developed understanding of how meanings are shaped in Boland's poetry. The response to the question is subtle, and supported by a high level of skill in applying concepts and methods from linguistic and literary study. Perceptive references to relevant literary and historical contexts develop the response. Although connections with other poems are not made until the final paragraph, the commentary is precise and detailed, leading to a strong conclusion.

4. AO1 AO2 Skilled literary and linguistic analysis to develop a focused response to the question: 'ideas about change'

5. AO1 AO2 A coherent, conceptual analysis, identifying significant features

6. AO1 AO2 AO4 Illuminating connections made between poems to further the poetic and stylistic analysis, and provide an interesting and fluent conclusion



QUESTION 5: CAROL ANN DUFFY, *YOU*

Question: Explore how Carol Ann Duffy presents the experience of falling in love in *You* and make connections with one or two other poems from your collection.

You should consider Duffy's use of poetic and stylistic techniques and significant literary or other relevant contexts.

You is the first poem in *Rapture*, and the first word of the collection is *Uninvited*, as the speaker cannot control her thoughts. This is a poem about intense passion and obsession, where "Falling in love is glamorous hell", an oxymoron revealing Duffy's fascination with the conflicts and contradictions of falling in love. In contrast, *Wintering*, a poem placed much later in the collection, shows falling in (and out) of love as inevitable, harsh and cold. There is no glamour in "a shroud of cold beneath my clothes". In both poems the speaker addresses an unnamed *You*; in this poem "you strolled in" and "There you are / on the bed", whereas in *Wintering*, "you come and go". The experience of falling in love, and the relationships, have changed significantly, as *Rapture* as a whole collection explores.¹

In both poems Duffy explores the kind of love that controls and dominates. The lover in *You* is an uninvited guest, and, as in *Wintering*, the speaker has no power to erase her from her thoughts. The "broken chords" of the lover's words play in her head in *Wintering*, with the adjective "broken" suggesting the negative relentlessness of those thoughts.²

In both poems dawn fails to offer any respite from this all-consuming love. In *You* the speaker wakes with her lips speaking the lover's name unconsciously, and in *Wintering* she is greeted by the birds who sing "gibberish" because they are insignificant and mean nothing in comparison, drowned out by the "broken chords" of the lover's words. This is a love that is inescapable.

In *You* the subordinating conjunction "so" in line two, suggests that it is the love and the thoughts of the lover that prompt her to seek escape in sleep, but, like Hamlet, she dreams. The repetition of the synaesthesia of "hard hard" creates a sense that the dream is no escape: she feels almost a physical presence. In the following line too, the contrast with the phonetic parallel of the sibilant "soft salt" of the tears creates the impression of a temporary release from the dreams, like the hissing sound of air being let out of a tyre.³

However, despite the positive associations of the "bright syllables" we realise in line four that this love is actually uncontrollable and negative. The speaker struggles to capture the experience of falling in love in language and uses the simile to approximate how she feels: It is "like a charm, like a spell". The syntactical parallelism of these phrases which sound like an incantation, reinforces the charm-like quality of love: she is powerless against this love.

1. AO1 AO3 AO4 A
confident, comparative introduction, responding to the question clearly. Relevant reference to the literary context of the two poems as part of the whole text

2. AO3 AO4 Apt and relevant selection of details from "Wintering" to illuminate the meaning of "You"

3. AO2 AO3 AO1
Integrating of terminology from literary and linguistic study, combined with a passing reference to other literary texts, concluding with a personal reflection on the image



The phonetic parallelism of the “ll” in “spell”, “fall”, “hell” and “kills” makes this even more clear. This poem carries a negative implication about the love from the start. Similarly to *Wintering*, there is a sense that the relationship will not last. As the speaker says in *Wintering*, “We’ve done again// that trick of turning love to pain”, and the adverb of frequency (“again”) shows us that this has happened before and, the poem implies, as the year cycles and the seasons pass, so will their relationship break up, be repaired, and break up again.⁴

The lexis and imagery in *You* is in stark contrast to *Wintering*. In *You* the physical intensity of falling in love is expressed through elemental and animalistic vocabulary and imagery - the ‘tiger ready to kill’ and “flame’s fierce licks”. The extended metaphor of the wilderness has the narrator hiding in the ‘long grass of routine’ from the implied physical threat. Whereas in ‘*Wintering*’ the lexical field of winter at night sustains the extended metaphors, in which the “rain”, “stars”, “moon”, “ice” and “bare trees” personify “turning love to pain”. **In *You* the love is so powerful that it has transformed the heart into something that is starved and predatory, and the sensory “licking” has become flames that are destroying her from inside. This is a desperate, destructive love, and in line eight, the object of that love enters, “larger than life”, whereas in *Wintering* the “winter thaws and melts” and a much softer renewal of love takes place at the end of the poem, as she “cannot resist”.**⁵

In *Wintering* the object of her love is never actually seen; it is just marked by the footprints in the snow. In *You* the lexical choices the poet makes to capture the presence of the lover are very revealing. The lover “strolled in” and “sprawled” and “stared back”: all verbs that connoted casualness and a theatricality. The speaker may go to bed, and dream, and wake, and fall in love, and hide, and open the door, but these verbs all feel neutral in comparison. **This is an unbalanced love where the speaker is vulnerable to the powers of dreams and spells, while the object of her love has an awareness of being watched, and a sense of superiority.**⁶

Like *Wintering*, where the love is reflected in the appearance of the trees and the garden and the wind, so in *You*, the face of the lover, as with many literary lovers before, is everywhere. The speaker can no longer see the world except through the lover. The lexical patterns of sight and perception (“hid” “gaze” “staring” “gapes”) emphasises the blindness of love.

Even the personified moon, (reflecting the speaker’s own neediness in the adjective “pining”) waits, with the reader, for the speaker to open the door at the end of the fourth verse. It is at this point that Duffy uses the shortest sentence in the poem. This is the transition between the love that has previously existed in her thoughts and emotions, and the actual object of that love. Like *Wintering* where the lover returns at the end, here, described as being “like a gift” and a “touchable dream” is the physical presence of the lover.

This is, from the start of the poem, a love that is all-consuming and controlling and the shift into the present tense in the declarative sentence “there you are” increases the sense of threat. The speaker is the receiver of this gift and should, therefore, be grateful, and the dream of love that **over-powered her thoughts and emotions in the first verse is now realised physically in the final line.**⁷

This is an interesting response that examines the nature of love and falling in love in two of Duffy’s poems. It selects details from *Wintering* to sustain a detailed comparison offering a coherent, persuasive argument. The terminology is drawn from both linguistic and literary study, and integrated into this fluently expressed answer. Although there is minimal reference to literary or other contexts, this response shows an understanding of the relevance of the poems as part of the whole collection, *Rapture*.

4. AO2 AO4

Terminology of stylistic analysis, applied to two poems, in order to explore the negative connotations of the love presented

5. AO1 AO2 AO4

Sustained connections and comparisons of details to illuminate how meanings are shaped in the two poems

6. AO1 Appropriate

“tying in” of this paragraph about the lover back to the question about love itself

7. AO1 AO2 Useful,

well-expressed final paragraph that adds to the sense that this is a coherent, tightly argued response



QUESTION 6: JACOB SAM-LA ROSE, *TALK THIS WAY*

Question: Explore some of the ways in which Jacob Sam-La Rose presents ideas and feelings about language in *Talk This Way* and make connections with one or two other poems from your collection.

You should consider Sam-La Rose's use of poetic and stylistic techniques and significant literary or other relevant contexts.

Jacob Sam-la Rose's anthology is called *Breaking Silence* and this title indicates how important speech and silence are to the whole collection. *Talk this Way* is a poem celebrating the way different influences have contributed to having a unique, personal voice, while others, such as the poems in 'Speechless' are more negative about feeling silenced or criticized for one's language.

In *Talk this way* instead of finding endless lexical repetitions associated directly with language, there are only five in this twenty one line poem: the verb "talk" is in the title; there is a reference to "love letters"; "pronunciation"; "brogue" and "tongues" and a more indirect reference to "dear Queen's best". The other relevant nouns and verbs are linked to sound, and it becomes clear that language can actually be found in the semantic field of music and celebration: in "hip-hop", "vinyl platters", "raw, unfettered music"; "dear music"; "notes of spilt casrip"; "dear music" and "wailing".¹ This suggests how the narrator feels that his voice has developed from a wide range of different spheres of life, different cultures and even different times, and not as a result of those who try to impose a particular way of speaking.

***Talk This Way* takes the unusual form of a thank you letter, with the graphological deviation of the off-set first line and the similarly indented final line emphasising this. His use of this form, with its direct address to all of these influences, everything from "dear girls on the bus" to the "Queen's English" and "dear music", (repeated several times), is clearly celebratory. The often abstract influences are expressed in concrete metaphors. For instance, the qualities of the "Queen's English" are captured in the concrete image of a neatly ironed seam of a pair of trousers. The extended noun phrase, with its compression, conjures up a whole world of contrasts between constrained, formal English (represented by the "cool" of the smart trousers) and the language of his roots, (expressed through the heat of the Caribbean noon day sun), cool and hot being set in opposition to each other.²**

As the list gains momentum in the ten line central verse, punctuated by eight commas, the inclusion of the dash at the end forces the reader to stop. The central verse placed the influences on his language in a specific culture in the low-frequency lexis of "guava cheese", "cassava bread", "casrip" and in the adjective "Guyanese", and the graphological deviation of space and indent before the next verse suggests a change in tone or subject.

1. AO1 AO2 Interesting stylistic approach used to suggest that language in this poem is not necessarily linked to words: strong, establishing paragraph

2. AO1 AO2 Effective interpretation of poetic features, with confident use of terminology to explore literary and linguistic concepts



In fact, the lexical patterns of “melting”, “cauldron and pit” and “molten” do contrast dramatically with the domestic images that are in the central verse. There is a suggestion of magic here in the metaphor of the “cauldron”, almost as though this language has been forged from the fire, or, like a phoenix, has risen from the flames. The juxtaposition of the fire and the implication of the verbs “birthed and spanked” are shocking. If “cauldron” connotes magic or even cooking, then birthing and spanking and wailing to heights suggests a baby, held up for the parents to admire. Dramatic too, is the introduction of the pronoun “we” at this point, so that suddenly “birthed and spanked” have a subject: the speaker and the combination of all these cultures, times, places, events and people have come together to forge this baby: this individual voice and language from the fire.³

In *Talk This Way* and in several of the *Speechless* poems, there is the sense that an authority has expectations about the right way to use language. The imperative of the title of *Talk This Way*, with the demonstrative pronoun “this” suggests that there are acceptable ways to speak, and then there are less acceptable ones. However this sense of repression is very much in the background in this poem, with no negative formulations suggesting its controlling power. Even ‘silence’ is ‘dear’ in this poem. By contrast, in *Speechless III*, negatives abound: “I know I’m not supposed to talk back” “I’m not supposed to stay”, “I don’t know how to say”.⁴

The first person voice in *Talk This Way* is, interestingly, mainly in a colloquial, standard form, except in the first two lines, where the definite article is omitted (“on road” “on bus”). It is the lexis, rather than the grammar that signals the Caribbean influences. This is also true of other poems in the collection, such as *Speechless*. In *Speechless III*, as in *Talk This Way*, standard English grammar is used throughout and the closest to London non-standard dialect is a quote, which is put by Sam-La Rose into italics. However in *Speechless III* the lexis also shows less Caribbean influence and some more academic words for language like “lexicon”, with more conventional figurative language, such as idioms like “chip on my shoulder”. Perhaps this is because of the acknowledged influences of his mother, his education and the “Queen’s’ English” on his language. Or maybe it’s because, in *Speechless III* he’s using more of the language of argument and ideas, thinking about political issues, about whether it’s acceptable to use the “N word”, how he has been constrained by *the lexicon* acceptable to his mother and about knowing “when to stay silent”. Speech and silence are linked to Mandela, Malcolm X, police harassment of black young people in this poem, and the discourse is perhaps more formal because of this.⁵

Both of these poems are clearly about cultural identity and language and about how individuals find a voice or a tongue, or find themselves constrained or forced to be silent. Whereas *Speechless III* is about how it feels to be linguistically repressed, or stopped from speaking, *Talk Like this* is the opposite. Even silence becomes something to be grateful for. It takes that moment of silence at the end of the poem in *Talk This Way* before the narrator declares his intentions to find his own voice, with the ellipsis of ‘to find my own’ ending the poem on a powerful, hopeful note, looking into the future. The memories of *Speechless III* have been left behind.⁶

This response demonstrates a high level of engagement with Sam La-Rose’s poetry and its influences. A confident and coherent interpretation is developed, with significant features fluently analysed. Vocabulary and terminology are used effectively to support a poetic and stylistic analysis and interesting points of connection are made between the poems discussed.

3. AO1 AO2 A coherent, sustained and well-developed interpretation, where personal response is evident in the way in which the stylistic and poetic analysis is applied

4. AO1 AO4 Interesting contrast with other poem/s to develop a coherent analysis

5. AO1 AO2 AO3 AO4 A fluent, well-integrated analysis, making connections between poems, and considering cultural contexts to develop an interpretation

6. AO1 AO2 A confident conclusion to a coherent poetic and stylistic analysis



QUESTION 7: WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, OTHELLO

Question: Explore how Shakespeare presents power and status in this extract from *Othello*.

You should consider the use of dramatic and stylistic techniques in the extract, its significance within the play and any relevant dramatic or other contexts.

Often power and status go hand in hand, and in a play where one character is a general and one is his "ancient" or standard bearer, you would expect the general to have more status and therefore more power than those lower in rank than him. However, as this extract makes clear, the balance of power is unstable.¹

From the start of this extract, (as he does throughout the play) Othello attempts to assert his status in the personal pronoun "thou" that he uses to address Iago. In response, Iago uses "you" as a mark of respect towards his social superior. This contrasts to his use of "thou" a few lines earlier, when he believes that Othello cannot hear him, which reveals the actual regard Iago has for Othello, as opposed to the respect that his status demands.

In this extract, Othello begins by apparently asserting his power through the repeated syntax of the imperative sentence structure ("never pray more..." "abandon all remorse, "Do deeds..." In his appeal to Iago for the truth, we see a hyperbolic language that has moved a long way from the controlled speech in Act 1 Scene 3.² Here, in Act 3, Othello struggles to find the punishment that would be equal to Iago's lying, and he introduces lexical patterns of religion ("pray" "remorse" "heaven" "damnation") thereby implying that his power is allied with God.³

The audience sees the dramatic irony in Iago's response to this, knowing, as they do, that Iago considers Othello to be as easily fooled as an ass.⁴ He responds with indignation that takes the form of simple and minor sentences designed to assert his power over naïve Othello. He uses the power of language to flatter him, by repeating the lexical patterns of "heaven" and "world". He uses the repeated syntax of exclamatory sentences "O grace! O heaven..." "O wretched fool..." "O monstrous world!" "O world", building in momentum as he appears to agree with Othello, and appeals to God to forgive him if he turns out to be lying.

He also uses the power of language to engage Othello in his use of interrogatives: "Are you a man. Have you a soul, or sense?" **This is characteristic of Iago's language in this extract, where he manipulates Othello with rhetorical questions in order to create uncertainty and doubt in Othello's mind. In contrast to Iago's twelve questions, Othello has none. It is clear that Iago has the power here and is directing the conversation.**⁵

1. AO1 The argument is clearly defined from the start, in relation to the question

2. AO2 AO1 Straight in to a tightly focused analytical approach, using grammatical method to explore meaning

3. AO2 Analysing lexis here. Essay linking these to meaning and keeping question in hand (AO1)

4. AO3 Considering the context of the whole play and employing knowledge of dramatic concepts

5. AO1 Detailed analysis here, really studying the extract closely and the way patterns of language determine relative power between the two characters



This is also seen in the way in which he introduces the adjective “honest”. Initially, in line 379, he refers to his own honesty, but repeats the morpheme twice in his eight line response to Othello’s accusation. It is clear that his manipulation is working, because Othello then repeats “honest” in line 383, Iago consolidates the preoccupation in a general observation about how honesty is not valued in this world, and by line 387 the morpheme “honest” is now linked to Desdemona by Othello, and Iago’s manipulation is successful. Iago’s power lies in his ability to use language, and therefore to influence Othello. By line 387, then, the uncertainty is clear in the verb “think”, and the adjective “honest” is firmly linked to the noun “wife”.

If Iago is asserting his power over Othello here both linguistically and intellectually, Othello is also indicating Desdemona’s status in his refusal to name her. He refers to her with the third person possessive pronoun three times, and by the third personal pronoun twice, and by “my wife” once, but never by name. **Characteristic of the status of women in Shakespearean times, Desdemona is defined only as a possession of her husband, rather than as an independent individual in her own right.**⁶ In contrast, Iago is careful to give the impression that he is keenly aware of Othello’s higher social status. Even while the subject of the conversation is adultery, he shows his deference in terms of address: “sir” “my lord” “sir”. However, when he mentions Cassio and Desdemona, he does so by name in order to create the sense of their individuality. It becomes more personal and immediate, and so has more power over Othello.

By line 392, the imperatives in Othello’s speech have softened to the modal “would I were...”. It seems that he is losing some of his power and this is actually a crucial point of the play where we see Iago taking control. Linguistically, Othello almost appears to correct himself (“would, nay, and will”), as he struggles to keep his certainty and power, but this is subtly undercut by Iago’s response. Instead of echoing Othello’s certainty, he reintroduces the modal “and may”.

Othello demands proof from the lower status character, and Iago responds by providing a mirage of images and narratives that leave Othello not only confused, but also losing control. **His responses to Iago’s speech are revealing: “Death and damnation! O!” “O monstrous! Monstrous!” “I’ll tear her to pieces.” These exclamations are indicative of his waning power of speech that will culminate in his complete silence and trance in Act 4.**⁷

The audience may resist the narrative that Iago is creating, but Iago makes it very difficult for Othello to resist. He sets the story in a barracks to make it easier for Othello the soldier to imagine it, and then he includes both reported and direct speech to create a sense of immediacy. Othello is powerless against Iago’s skills of speech. He is, by his own admission, “little blest with the soft phrase of peace”. He is powerless against the lexical patterns of animals (“goats” “monkeys” “wolves”) and the seventeen line speech that ends with verbs associated with violence and suffering (“gripe” “wring” “pluck”) and thus Iago manages to suggest that Desdemona has these combined qualities of violent animalism. This is enough proof for Othello of her guilt.

Othello has no power to respond as a statesman should. **Gone are the early poetic speeches that signalled his high status, and instead this extract ends with an aggressive animalistic response that echoes aspects of Iago’s own narrative: “I’ll tear her all to pieces.”**⁸

This is a highly detailed piece of analysis, with a particular strength being the application of grammatical knowledge. There are other levels used, in particular, lexis. It is clear that the candidate knows the place of the scene in the drama and can see the writing in relation to wider social contexts.

6. AO3 Usefully applying the wider social context to the analysis

7. Employing stylistic approach (AO1), in detailed way, picking out patterns of evidence to explore both the scene and the question (AO2) hooking in wider knowledge of the play

8. AO3 Using knowledge of the play to enforce point. Fully aware of the play’s structure



QUESTION 8: OSCAR WILDE, *THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING ERNEST*

Question: Explore how Wilde presents social conventions in this extract from *The Importance of Being Ernest*.

You should consider the use of dramatic and stylistic techniques in the extract, its significance within the play and any relevant dramatic or other contexts.

In this extract, and throughout *The Importance of Being Ernest*, Wilde mocks society and its conventions. Lady Bracknell, the central character in this extract, is Wilde's masterful comic character; her non-sequiturs and hyperbolic statements, delivered with serious conviction, allow Wilde to reveal the absurdity of social conventions. The audience recognises that Lady Bracknell's opinions, prejudices and social expectations are founded on Wilde's observations of English Victorian society. Her ideas about the role of men in society, marriage, the town and country, and education provide satirical commentary on actual Victorian conventions, and the audience laughs not only at Lady Bracknell, but also at what her character reveals about society.¹

This extract comes in Act 1, just after the moment that Jack has proposed to Gwendolen and she has accepted him. Lady Bracknell is now preparing to interview Jack about his eligibility. Her opening statement and actions clearly portray her sense of power in this situation. She does not have to ask to sit down, but does feel able to order Jack to do so. **Dramatically, this is humorous, as Jack has previously been both instructed to rise by Lady Bracknell and also restrained from rising by Gwendolen, and in terms of social conventions and deference towards Lady Bracknell, remaining standing seems to indicate his respect for his social superior.**² Stylistically, her request to Jack is interesting. **Not only is it softened in the use of the metaphorical "take a seat", but also the conventional use of the modal "may" in this form of indirect request is replaced with the stronger "can". Stylistically, it now appears to be closer to an imperative, and Jack's response, "Thank you, Lady Bracknell, I prefer standing", then seems to be closer to defiance than to deference. The actors are provided with great opportunities for physical humour in this farcical comedy of manners.**³

Both characters mark an adherence to social conventions throughout this exchange in their formal terms of address. Their status is bound in the titles "Mr" and "Lady". Therefore, while Jack may acknowledge Lady Bracknell in his expression of gratitude ("thank you") and in the use of her title, the final verb phrase "I prefer standing" undercuts his sincerity. "Prefer" is a stative verb that suggests an individuality and an opinion, rather than a slavish following of the social conventions as laid down by Lady Bracknell.³

1. AO1 AO3 A confident introduction, focused on the question, and highlighting the significance of context

2. AO1 and AO3 considering the question carefully with respect to social convention

3. AO1 and AO2 integrated here, applying grammatical knowledge to study meaning



With her note book in hand, she suggests that she is following social conventions in the phrase "I feel bound to tell you..." However the social conventions of marriage are actually mocked, if not by her, then by Wilde, as she talks of the list that she has compiled. The comedy arises from the disjunction between the formality of Lady Bracknell's speech and the absurd content. The personal pronoun "my" that implies a personal and sincere engagement with the process is juxtaposed with the humorous revelation that this list is the same as the Duchess of Bolton's. **The use of the definite article "the" and the pre-modifier "dear" makes it clear that this name is being employed as a signal about Lady Bracknell's own social status. "The" underlines the uniqueness, and "dear" highlights the apparent connection between the two women.**⁴ The verb "work" in the declarative statement further emphasises this mercenary, practical approach to the social conventions of marriage that is more to do with social climbing than love. The insertion of "in fact" helps to create a sense of casualness to her statement about working on the list collaboratively, as though this is nothing out of the ordinary. As with much of this play, the values of emotions and sincerity are outweighed by the values of financial gain and increased social standing. Wilde plays on this idea as Lady Bracknell not only defines herself as a mother, but more than that as a mother pre-modified by "really" and "affectionate". Juxtaposed as this is, by the verb "requires", it is evident that there are two aspects of social conventions at work here: one social convention requires her to be a mother, and the other social convention requires her daughter to marry well financially.

4. Synthesis of AO1 and AO2 here, with close lexical/grammatical focus, linked to meaning and to question

This extract shows how the play generally subverts values: this is a play where greed could be said to triumph over love; where the trivial is considered more important than the serious, and, the attractions of the town are valued more highly than the country. The irony and humorous contradiction inherent in the line, "A girl with a simple, unspoiled nature, like Gwendolen, could hardly be expected to reside in the country", highlights Wilde's sharp satire of Victorian urban values. **At the heart of this inversion is Lady Bracknell, who values all the wrong things. In this extract, in the final line of her first long speech, there is a full stop after "requires" but the non-sequitur of the interrogative "Do you smoke?" indicates that this is a character who is unconventional both socially and emotionally. There is a ridiculous jump from the ideal picture of the "really affectionate mother" to the trivial pre-occupation with smoking, and the hilarious suggestion that smoking is good because "A man should always have an occupation of some kind." The audience senses that Wilde enjoys suggesting, through Lady Bracknell, that "There are far too many idle men in London as it is", possibly with reference to his own social circle and experiences. The absurdity of these comments points towards underlying, serious social commentary.**⁵

5. AO1 AO3 Close analysis, developed with perceptive awareness of significance of context

While Lady Bracknell is instantly recognisable as a type, she is exaggerated in her tyrannical authority and apparently the absolute arbiter of everything ("A very good age..." "That is satisfactory..." "I am pleased to hear it"), she is the perfect character to reveal the absurd nature of the social norms of the upper class.⁶ Wilde himself described this play as "exquisitely trivial, a delicate bubble of fancy" where over bred characters are bored in stable and wealthy settings. **However, in its exploration of the forms and rules of this inverted, trivial, mercenary society, this play also manages to question the validity of the social conventions that Lady Bracknell apparently reveres so highly.**⁶

6. AO3 Considering genre of comedy and notion of stock characters to support discussion

A good strong conclusion, which brings in the wider biographical context of the play and its form. Overall there are some highly detailed passages which insightfully analyse Wilde's satirising of social convention.



QUESTION 9: TENNESSEE WILLIAMS, *A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE*

Question: Explore how Williams presents Blanche and Stella in this extract from *A Streetcar Named Desire*.

You should consider the use of dramatic and stylistic techniques in the extract, its significance within the play and any relevant dramatic or other contexts.

This extract is a stretch of dialogue from the first scene of the play, in which the two sisters are on their own on stage, not having seen each other for a considerable period, with Blanche entering Stella's world for the first time. As such, it is an important scene, in setting up the key areas of potential emotional conflict for the two women and establishing the power relationships between them.

By the time the conversation in this extract takes place, Williams has already established some characteristics of the women, such as Blanche's vulnerability and reliance on drink, and Stella's gentleness and her relationship with her husband and her surroundings. This extract, however, further emphasises the different traits of the sisters.¹

The extract opens with a pause, in which the stage directions inform us that Blanche "stares" and Stella "smiles". These verbs quite clearly are indicative of the dynamics between the two characters. Any pause in a conversation, unless done for rhetorical reasons, suggests a break down in communication, and the verb "stares" connotes hostility or a lack of regard for, or understanding of, the person who is being stared at. The response from Stella is conciliatory, and significantly Blanche avoids eye contact, and looks "down at her glass".

The exclamatory, hyperbolic sentence "You're all I've got in the world.." is highly charged and emotionally manipulative. The syntactical parallelism of her statement, for example, "You're all... you're not.." places the focus firmly on the second person pronoun: on Stella and how much Blanche both depends on her and has undue expectations of her. Stella recognises Blanche's needy subtext, requiring something of her that she seems to fail to provide, and responds "sincerely" in a simple, declarative sentence that reminds her sister of the reality: "you know that's not true."²

Blanche is a character who is unable to escape from the past. **The plu-perfect tense of "I'd forgotten how quiet you were" is revealing in terms of the way in which Blanche is presented,³** the tense choice here showing how her perception of Stella is based on a Stella in the past, rather than the Stella she has encountered in the present. She cannot understand the present Stella, and why she has married Stanley, and why she lives in the place she does.

1. AO1 AO3 Useful reference to the dramatic context of this extract, in order to establish what is already known about the characters, and the extract's significance within the play as a whole

2. AO2 AO1 A wide vocabulary, and confident use of stylistic and linguistic terminology presents a convincing argument about the way in which Williams presents the differences between the characters

3. AO1 AO2 Stylistic analysis is used to support a coherent interpretation about the way in which Blanche is constructed



Williams also presents Blanche through other, more obvious linguistic choices. In this extract, for example, she has thirty two lines of speech, while Stella has less than half that number, and she directs the conversation throughout, often moving from one subject to the next, occasionally without completing the first sentence: "A good habit to get into... You haven't asked me..." and "I couldn't put all of those details into the wire... Oh, this buzzes right through me..." Williams presents her as being dominant over her sister, and yet slightly out of control. She moves from the present, to the past ("A good habit... You haven't asked me...") in part because she wants to tell Stella her version of what has happened, and in part because it quickly becomes clear that she cannot escape her past and what her distant past represents for her: youth, beauty, wealth, stability. The shifting from past to present again, with her focus on drink, on Stella's weight, or the number of rooms, reveals the preoccupations of this character with appearance and status, and her dependence on drink as an escape from reality.

Blanche's version of Stella differs from the one that Williams presents to us, creating dramatic irony. As an audience we see through Blanche and have a more critical view of her than Stella seems to have. This is particularly achieved through the lexical patterns that emerge when Blanche talks about or addresses Stella. Her references to Stella include birds and children ("plump as a partridge", "you messy child", "more little hands folded like a cherub", "blessed child"). This reveals as much about the way in which Blanche is presented as a character who imposes a superiority and dominance in her words, as it does about Stella. Lexically, Stella is dramatically different from Blanche. She has none of the hyperbolic, fragmented, loosely constructed sentences, and her language is generally more literal and controlled, as she plays the role of the reassuring adult to Blanche as the impetuous child.⁴

The stage directions support this reading, as we see Stella taking the responsibility, co-operating with Blanche and her topic management "a little wearily" and "dutifully". There is no doubt that Blanche is presented as directing this scene, as she interrupts Stella three times; delivers the story of her past almost as though she has rehearsed it, even physically directing Stella in her imperatives and declaratives ("you haven't asked me..." "you haven't said a word about..." "I want you to look at my figure" "I said stand up"). She uses modals to instruct Stella: "you ought to have it cut", ensuring that all the attention is on her as she directs the conversation. **Even the stage directions reveal her to be constantly moving (looking down at her glass, "nervously tapping a cigarette", she "rises", "turns around" and "touches her forehead") in contrast to Stella who moves once, standing up on Blanche's request.⁵**

In an extract from the first scene of the play, this is an early opportunity for Williams to reveal themes and motifs through his presentation of these characters that will become significant later on. The audience is already aware of the dramatic irony, when Blanche refuses a glass of whiskey, saying euphemistically "one's my limit". At this point, we are aware that she has previously had a drink, and washed the glass to conceal the fact.⁶ Even within this extract, we see her going back on her word, and having another drink, but the way in which Williams presents her speech at this point is indicative of the power that alcohol has over her. The use of the deictic "this" in "this buzzes right through me" prevents her from having to actually name and therefore to draw attention to the drink itself, an example of her failure to face up to reality. Stella picks this up, referring to the whiskey as "another", and then when Blanche has yet another drink, she just has "one tiny nip more". The four pre-modifiers attempt to reduce the sense of importance, and the euphemistic noun "nip" suggests something small. The vague language of "sort of" and "so to speak" seem to serve the purpose of obscuring what is actually happening. This, Williams shows us, is a character who lies to others and perhaps to herself.

4. AO2 AO1 The ideas about the different traits of the characters are expressed fluently here: using the terms of address and sentence structure as an indicator of how this character is created

5. AO2 Dramatic and stylistic analysis are combined here to analyse the linguistic and paralinguistic aspects of each character

6. AO3 Recognition of dramatic irony that contributes to the way in which meaning is created



The lexical patterns of truth and stories (“liar” “you think I believe that story?”) foreshadow the themes that run through the play. Significantly, too, the motif of light that Williams introduces in the play’s first stage directions about Blanche (“a delicate beauty must avoid a strong light”) is echoed here in “Daylight never exposed so total a ruin”. This is a character who is presented as vulnerable, unreliable and superficially dominant at this point of the play, and it is only in the interaction between the two sisters that we can clearly see these characteristics. In contrast, as we have seen, both linguistically and dramatically, Stella is still, controlled and assured, and by presenting these characters as being so different, we can anticipate the outcome of this play.⁷

7. AO1 Final paragraph successfully used to summarise the dramatic and linguistic character function – perhaps the projection to the end of the play is over-ambitious, as the implication is not “spelled out”

A well-developed and persuasive critical analysis that demonstrates an ability to apply both stylistic and dramatic analysis to the play. It is relevant to, and focused on the question throughout, and shows an awareness of how the characters develop throughout the play, and, fundamentally, the techniques and methods that Williams uses to create them.



QUESTION 10: BRIAN FRIEL, *TRANSLATIONS*

Question: Explore how Friel presents the conversation with the two British soldiers in this extract from *Translations*.

You should consider the use of dramatic and stylistic techniques in the extract, its significance within the play and any relevant dramatic or other contexts.

In a play that has at its heart an exploration of the link between the way in which language shapes and defines communities, this extract is the first time that a conversation between the Baile Beag community and the British soldiers has taken place. Friel has prepared us for the soldiers' arrival in the discussions that the community have had with one another, where they talk about the role of the Gaelic language and the fact that Hugh has already met Captain Lancey, who does not speak Irish. Act One serves the dramatic function of establishing identities, and themes, and motifs, and it is at this point that the exploration of language, translation, and the re-naming of the place names comes together.¹

The dramatic power of this extract comes from the layers of sophistication in Friel's presentation of language and communication. The audience enters into a kind of dramatic agreement with the playwright, in which it is accepted that the Irish characters are speaking Gaelic, not English, and therefore Owen's "translation" cannot be understood by the British soldiers. This device, central to the impact of this extract, allows Owen to manipulate and distort Lancey's words. The power relationships and conflict between British and Irish interests are revealed with great subtlety through this unusual dramatic device. Friel also exploits the comic potential created by this device, with the audience given the privileged position of understanding all interactions on stage, and amused by the misunderstandings and distortions presented. As well as conflict between the characters, Friel presents attraction, and the audience enjoys Owen's translation of Maire's combative "Has he anything to say?" with "She says she's dying to hear you."²

From the start of this extract, the patronising attitude of Lancey towards the community is presented through his lexis and syntax. He opens, over-accommodating as if he was speaking to children with a simple sentence that explains what a map is. However, Friel presents him as being dehumanised to the extent that his lexical of "representation" belongs to the low-frequency lexis of official documents written in Standard English. Dramatic irony is present here, as the audience are aware that although the Baile Beag community does not choose to speak in English, the majority of them are able to understand it.³

1. AO3 AO1 Functional first paragraph, establishing the context of this scene, and the dramatic development that precedes it, as well as giving an overview of the direction this essay will take

2. AO1 AO2 Focused interpretation of dramatic techniques, concepts and effects

3. AO2 Stylistic and dramatic analysis supports the interpretation of the way in which Friel presents Lancey linguistically



Lancey, as the voice of the new order is presented as being unable to distinguish between intelligence and an ability or unwillingness to speak his language. He equates an inability or unwillingness to speak English with ignorance: if they cannot speak English, then they will not know what a map is. He actually self-corrects as he uses the high-frequency noun “picture” to explain the concept of map. **He uses minor, broken sentences, deliberately missing the dummy auxiliary verb “do” from “do you understand?” presumably in order to keep the sentence simple for his audience. Friel mocks him in his use of the rhetorical questions (“you understand picture?” “yes?”) that clearly echo the erudite questions that Hugh asks in his hedge-school to test his pupils’ Latin.**⁴

4. AO2 Detailed, sustained analysis of the language that is used to create Lancey

Friel presents the inhumanity of Lancey through his inability to understand the people who he talks to: unable, for example, to fight his instinct to use Latinate words (“representation” “representing” “miniature” “scaled”) that indicate his pomposity. The first speech is peppered with nine hyphens, two question marks and a comma: this is a character who is obviously uncomfortable in his setting and the manner in which he is being forced to talk. **His use of the demonstrative pronoun “this” is revealing, as there is a syntactic repetition here as “representing this country” becomes “showing your country”. The second person pronoun indicates a recognition at some level that he is displaced in this country: it does not belong to him.**⁵ Friel presents him as finally giving up on adapting his language to his audience, and in a moment that anticipates the end of the play (where Sarah no longer talks, and where Hugh forgets his words) here Lancey tails away in his repetition of the weak preposition “of”.

5. AO1 Effective use of stylistic terminology, and evidence of a wide vocabulary

The audience’s response is, perhaps, represented by the sniggering of Doalty, Bridget and Sarah. While they may not speak in this extract, and when Maire speaks, Owen deliberately distorts her meaning in his translation, the laughter is articulate, and has the power to undermine even Lancey’s self-confidence. He needs Owen’s reassurance, both paralinguistically as he looks at him to check, and linguistically in his interrogative “yes?”

His discomfort is therefore obvious, when he is attempting to adapt his language and also when he is trying to communicate with Owen in a more informal manner. There is a dramatic contrast between his fragmented line of speech punctuated with six full stops (“I see. Yes. Very well. Perhaps you’re right. Well. What we are doing is this.”) where he interacts with Owen, and his speech delivered in an official language. The speech beginning “His Majesty’s Government...” consists of forty words, in a complex sentence with a single hyphen. His previous longest (although incomplete) sentence in this extract is twelve lines long.

The “His Majesty’s Government” speech represents the language of power, with a lexis of technical jargon (“triangulation” “hydrographic” “topographic”), and Lancey is comfortable using it. The contrast is so exaggerated, that the effect is humorous, and the pragmatics of Hugh supports this reading. **While he declares “Excellent. Excellent” he pours himself a drink. There seems to be a gap between Hugh’s need for a drink, and his praise for what is happening. Hugh is an articulate, often pompous, intelligent character, but his role here is being taken over by both Lancey and Owen. Maire has already voiced the idea that**⁶ speaking Gaelic is a “barrier to progress”, and here we see Hugh being displaced by characters who have come from outside the community, much as the past is being eroded as the place names are changed and Anglicised.

6. AO1 Interesting analysis of the character of Hugh, perhaps not tied tightly enough into the question about his role in the conversation with the soldiers

Owen acts as an intermediary between the soldiers and the community, but he, himself, is back after six years away and is marked out as different through his language and clothes. Here, Owen takes the pompous language, the Latinate phrases and complex sentences and translates it into a different register that actually distorts what has been said.



This distortion is charged with political significance, for example in Owen's significant omission of "the Empire" in his translation. It may be humorous to hear the pomposity of the official language humanised and simplified by Owen, but the lexis of each character reveals something more threatening. Owen repeats the pronoun "you" and "yours" and "they" rather than we, echoing the distance evoked in Lancey's use of "our" in "our governing charter", and his distance from the community is clear. However, while he may echo, and possibly mock the official language in "This survey demonstrates" speech, and while he may use the familiar term of address to Yolland ("George"), he is not truly part of the soldiers' culture either. After all, Yolland fails to get his name right, calling him "Roland" that is closer to his own name, than to "Owen".

After this first encounter with the soldiers, we are presented with an illustration of how a language is imposed upon a community, and how it can both define and distort meaning, and ultimately threaten to destroy a culture and a past.⁷

7. AO1 Closing paragraph used to summarise, perhaps needs examples from the text to clarify the points made about imposition, definition and distortion in the conversation in this extract

This is a highly consistent response that is fluent in expression. It demonstrates excellent knowledge of the terminology appropriate for dramatic and stylistic analysis, and the application is precise. It might have benefited from more in terms of AO3 and the wider context (the original reception of the play, perhaps), but it does establish its context within the play very well.



QUESTION 11: TIMBERLAKE WERTENBAKER, *OUR COUNTRY'S GOOD*

Question: Explore how Wertenbaker presents ideas about language in this extract from *Our Country's Good*.

You should consider the use of dramatic and stylistic techniques in the extract, its significance within the play and any relevant dramatic or other contexts.

This extract is from Act 1 Scene 10, and is a quiet, reflective scene that provides a contrast to the final scene of Act 1 that ends with the first rehearsal in shambles and four of the convicts being accused of stealing food.¹

As the title for this scene "John Wisehammer, and Mary Brenham Exchange Words" suggests, this extract is all about words and language. Not only does the phrase "exchange words" function metaphorically and idiomatically, meaning to talk, but in the lexical choice of the verb "exchange" Wertenbaker implies an equality between these two characters.² Mary gives one word, and receives another in its place from Wisehammer, and those words thereby seem to be a sort of currency, and to be precious and valued.

This is a play that is about the power that language has to redeem or to redefine identities. In the acting of *The Recruiting Officer*, the characters are provided with a language that they can reject in favour of their own voice (Dabby) or imitate in order to communicate with their social superiors (Liz). A bit like the *Green World* in Shakespearean comedies, the old order is threatened and the dramatic device of the play-within-a-play enables the convicts in particular to see themselves differently.³

As this extract shows, it also lets the convicts see language as something that has a worth. They are displaced from their country of birth, **and forced into a homogenised identity⁴** of "convicts" or "convict women", and then they are given a new language to speak in the form of the words of Farquar. The result is that they begin to question and to interrogate language, to see the power that it has to define.

1. AO3 contextualising well here, but no mention of language yet

2. AO1 Tight focus on the question here with some insight

3. Putting scene in context of whole play and in the context of genre of comedy generally. The link with the next paragraph could be more smoothly made, but this information does further the discussion. **(AO3)**

4. AO1 Wide vocabulary used to enhance answer



The verb “copying” is significant in the stage directions at the start of this extract. Mary is writing down the words without much understanding, and yet Wertenbaker has selected an extract from Farquar’s play that precisely draws attention to the importance of **comprehending the nuances of language. In the extract from *The Recruiting Officer*, the connotations of verbs are being evaluated. “Counsel” rather than “command”, and the syntactical parallelism evident in “I don’t promise this with the authority of a parent, but as the advice of your friend” illustrates the theme of the scene itself.**⁵ Wertenbaker uses the discourse of another text to foreground the nature of equality rather than authority, counsel rather than command, and then it moves seamlessly into *Our Country’s Good* itself as Wisehammer also evaluates and questions language.

The syntax may be different, as is the register, but the meaning is echoed across these two texts. Wisehammer may speak in minor, fragmented sentences (“Friend. That’s a good word. Short but full of promise”), but he captures the weight of Farquar’s words. It is not until his next speech that it becomes clear that his own voice is taking over from Farquar’s. In his speech about the connotations of the word “country”, his syntax has completely altered. There are no minor or single word sentences, and instead, the syntax and punctuation has evident parallels with “I would rather counsel than command” with the formal colon, rather than the more colloquial hyphen.

The audience realises that the focus is now on the way in which Wisehammer is using words, rather than on Farquar’s. Farquar shows his characters evaluating the merits of “counsel” and “command”, but Wisehammer then deconstructs the noun “country” to reveal the way in which it can mean respite, or oppression, or rejection. Clearly, there is the dramatic irony, as the audience recognises the relevance that each of these words has to Mary and to Wisehammer.

They pick out abstract nouns or states of being throughout this extract: “Abject” “Injustice” “Guilty” “shame” “lonely” “loveless” “love” “laughter”, and in the selection of these words, Wertenbaker emphasises both the themes of the play and also the preoccupations of the characters themselves.⁶ Economically, Wertenbaker presents us with the idea that characters can define themselves by a single abstract noun (“shame” or “guilt” in Mary’s case) **just as the officers have defined the convicts in a single categorisation (“You’re Jewish, aren’t you? You’re guilty”, says Ross at the close of Scene 11).**⁷

As if prompted by Wisehammer’s interest, Mary too begins to examine the meaning of language, rather than simply just copying it without understanding. To Mary’s interrogative “What does indulgent mean?” Wisehammer replies in the declarative that suggests certainty and finality. **However, in the pause that follows his words, there of a sense of dramatic irony, as we realise that Wisehammer is choosing just one definition of the adjective; he is defining it only in terms of its relevance to Mary. The two texts are now lexically linked, as Wisehammer repeats the adjective “careful”, but this is the last trace of Farquar’s language.**⁸

The tone changes as the intimacy between the two characters increases, and they play with language, with the phonetic of parallelism of “shy” and “shame”, of “love” “luck and “latitudinarian”. Throughout this extract, Wertenbaker presents language as something that is there to be questioned; it has the power to define, but, as we see by the end of this extract, like the play itself, it also has the power to entertain.

There could be a smoother synthesis of ideas and analysis in this answer – but the analysis is consistently detailed throughout and every aspect of the discussion is linked back to potential meanings and effects. Terminology is accurate throughout and expression always coherent.

5. AO1 and AO2

Analytical sentences used effectively, applying a range of methods (eg grammar and rhetorical devices) as part of analysis with insightful focus on language and power

6. AO1 AO2

Using a lexical approach: exploring relationship between lexical patterns, language and themes of whole play

7. AO3

Apt cross-reference beyond the scene which perceptively captures a key pre-occupation of the play

8. AO3

Exploring dramatic technique



QUESTION 12: JEZ BUTTERWORTH, *JERUSALEM*

Question: Explore how Butterworth presents Phaedra and Johnny in this extract from *Jerusalem*.

You should consider the use of dramatic and stylistic techniques in the extract, its significance within the play and any relevant dramatic or other contexts.

This scene, from the final stages of the play, brings Johnny and Phaedra together for the first time. The audience probably experiences a sense of shock as Phaedra appears from the trailer. Up till now she has been absent from the realistic exchanges in the drama, with the other characters (and the audience) uncertain about her whereabouts, even perhaps thinking that she is dead. She has only been present to the audience as a figure standing outside of the drama, providing a prologue, and then a kind of chorus, singing first *Jerusalem* in Act One and then *Werewolf* in Act Two. We have not yet heard her spoken voice or seen her enter the action and interact with other characters.¹

1. AO1 AO3 Clear contextualising of the scene within the drama

Perhaps the most surprising thing is the nature of that interaction, when it finally does occur, and how it reveals a very different side to Johnny. There is a much quieter, more gentle and less aggressive kind of character that presents itself now, at a moment when perhaps his power over his world is shown to be threatened.

When Phaedra speaks, the repeated interrogatives ("Have they gone? Who are they, Johnny? What do they want?" "What's that?" "When? How?" "What, like a gift?" "Who gave it to you?" "Do you know what to do?" etc) total fifteen. In contrast, Johnny uses none at all.² This creates the sense of a child-adult relationship. Johnny co-operates in the conversation, responding in declarative sentences to her questions and with none of the taboo language that is typical of his speech elsewhere. The dialogue is a series of adjacency pairs where he completes the pair rather than disrupting it as he might have done previously, and with none of the taboo language that is typical of Johnny's speech elsewhere. He adopts a vaguer, quieter tone which is similar to the one he uses with the professor. **So much so, that there is syntactic and lexical parallelism in the answer he gives Phaedra and the Professor about the identities of the officials: "They're from the Palace".³ Although here, Johnny mimics the confidence and the pomposity of the official language in the Latinate words "services" and "community"; the paralinguistic response of Phaedra suggests that she is unconvinced. She "shivers" and this verb echoes the moments when characters sense an incomprehensible power or force and, like Dawn, they tremble or shake.**

2. AO1 AO2 Interesting selection of detail from the text used to illustrate the contrasts between the characters. Evidence of a control in terms of a stylistics approach, and an ability to draw from the vocabulary of literary and linguistic study

3. AO2 Clear knowledge of the text: recollection of extracts from earlier in the play



The syntax in Johnny's speech reveals an aspect of his character that serves the function of engaging the audience's sympathy. He speaks in simple sentences that are designed to allow Phaedra to speak. **His response "It just showed up" syntactically makes the goldfish responsible for its own appearance, with the adverb "just" increasing the sense of casualness, and the idiomatic phrase "showed up" increasing the informality of the utterance.**

The goldfish performs an important dramatic function in this scene, providing insights into both Johnny and Phaedra. It is both a powerful physical object on the stage and also has a highly charged symbolic presence. There is an underlying threat, with the dramatic suspense surrounding the puncturing of the bag and nervousness about whether Johnny will rescue the goldfish from dying. The fact that he does signals to the audience something about Johnny's underlying goodness and will for life, despite his increasing isolation and loss of power. It seems that Phaedra knows that he will save the goldfish.

Her actions and behaviour here suggest a wisdom that give her a power beyond that of just a young girl, and this ties in with her presence as chorus and prologue. Her insistence on naming the fish and her comment that it is "like a gift" seem like a call for self-awareness, responsibility and care. This is however, a noun that Johnny is unwilling to repeat. While he mocks the authorities and uses the verb "given", he replaces it with "left" twice, when referring to the fish, almost as though he does not want that emotional attachment. He needs, the audience later realises, to disconnect himself from all his friends in order to escape from the modern world that encroaches on him: "Time's running out", says Phaedra prophetically.⁴

It appears, on first reading that Phaedra is directing and managing the topic, but it is precisely the vagueness and uncertainty of Johnny's responses that drives the conversation: ("Something like that" "I suppose..." "I ain't got a clue" "I don't know") and twice he uses the idiomatic phrase "search me". This seems to be central to this extract⁵, Johnny being lost and Phaedra trying to provide him with a path towards finding himself.

Naming is a hugely significant issue in this scene. Johnny repeatedly refers to Lee first as "a" boy, with the indefinite article suggesting a complete detachment from him, and then later as "the" boy which at least acknowledges his individuality and uniqueness, but, like the fish, in this extract, he is nameless. "Everything needs a name", says Phaedra, and the lexical patterning of "call" "nameless" and "name", that is repeated seven times in seven lines, foregrounds the thematic importance. Phaedra may use Johnny's name in this extract, but he refers to her as "fairy" to imply endearment, to reflect her role and costume, and also to suggest the mythical, liminal quality this character has. He uses proper nouns for places, as he tells his mythic tale of travelling the four corners of the globe from "Clacton-on-Sea" to "Timbuktu" to "Flintock", using the phonetic parallelism to create humour in the comparison between the places, but in an echo of his last meeting with Ginger, he uses the synecdochal "boy" for Lee. Johnny's failure to be able to name things is clearly symbolic of his failure to identify who he is or his place in the world.

4. AO2 AO3 Detailed analysis of the text using a stylistic approach and developing ideas with perceptive exploration of dramatic methods

5. AO1 Interesting analysis about the roles of the characters in this conversation. Perhaps it needs "spelling out" that the language indicates that the characters both take the lead in the conversation in this extract, but in different ways. This is implied in this essay, but not stated



He is fighting against a tide of names earlier as the petition is read out, and while he appeals to Parsons to stop, the names keep coming. He attempts to counter with his own identity: "I'm Rooster Byron..." but it does not seem to be enough. It is not until the close of the play that we fully realise just how important names and the power of naming is:⁶ it is only through his incantation of the Byron clan and the ancient mythic figures (that so clearly echoes Parson reading from the petition) that Johnny is able to fight back. Arguably, the way in which Phaedra is presented as a guiding influence in this extract is preparation for this climax.

6. AO3 Understanding of the position of this extract in the play, arguing that it is central to the development of the character of Johnny

This is a fluently expressed, engaging answer that fully addresses the question. The essay reveals a good knowledge of the terminology and vocabulary associated with dramatic and stylistic analysis, and an ability to apply it to the text astutely.



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