

Commentary on candidate evidence

Candidate 5

The evidence for this candidate has achieved the following marks for this course assessment component. The candidate was awarded **18 marks**.

Q27. Discuss some of the principal dramatic means by which the main characters in two plays are presented as being alienated from the world around them.

Knowledge and Understanding

The candidate shows **secure knowledge and understanding** of both texts and **a relevant exploration which demonstrates secure consideration of the implication to the question**. This is seen in the opening paragraph where “alienated” is developed into: “...alienated from reality and the world surrounding them... obsessed with the past... in order to escape the truth of their situations.” The focus of the question on “principal dramatic means” is relevantly introduced through “stagecraft”, “plastic theatre which allows symbolic meaning to be attached to props, lighting, and sound” (paragraph one). The candidate deals with a number of characters in terms of alienation: Blanche for Streetcar and Tom, Amanda and Laura for the Glass Menagerie. Textual reference is **extensive** and used throughout to **clearly support the demands of the question**. There is an even treatment of both texts and the candidate moves fluently between the texts.

Analysis

There is **a relevant analysis of a range of literary techniques which strengthen the line of argument**: characterisation, setting and symbolism (including the symbolic use of minor characters Jim and Mitch). The candidate also explores the idea of plastic theatre in relation to the use of props, sound and stage directions. More are mentioned, but not elaborated on.

The candidate begins the analysis of the texts by introducing the concept of the memory play, supported by quotation. While this is a **relevant task appropriate technique** which is being examined, the comment: “the things that go on in the play are not realistic...” is not skilfully used to strengthen the argument, placing this comment in the range 18-16. The discussion of the single setting in Streetcar: “... not only claustrophobic, forcing their dreams to be confronted and destroyed... but ...they are removed from the outside society” is better; the gloss on “alienation” is appropriate, but the candidate then comments less skilfully on Tom’s use of the fire escape. Analysis here is seen to be **strengthening the line of argument**. The candidate continues to analyse techniques successfully on pages 5, 6, 7 and 8, using **extensive textual evidence** to strengthen the line of argument by discussing the role of Jim and Mitch and Blanche’s romantic

delusions about him to display alienation. Comparisons between the plays are successfully made: "...both characters alienate themselves from a reality that is too difficult to face" demonstrating a **clearly identifiable evaluative stance with respect to the question and securely based on evidence discussed within the response**. The analysis of both plays continues in the examination of the use of "detailed stage directions". The final section of the response is focused on Williams's use of symbols to convey alienation. The evidence is relevant: the unicorn for Laura and "the cracking sound in the sky" for Amanda and the lantern and the Varsouviana for Blanche.

Evaluation

There is a clearly identifiable evaluative stance with respect to both texts and the question, which is securely based on evidence discussed.

The evaluation of both plays is on task but the final paragraph lacks the precision which would be found in the range of 20–19.

Technical accuracy

This achieves minimum competence.

This essay fully meets all the criteria set out in band 18–16.

Mark: 18