

Commentary on candidate evidence

The candidate evidence has achieved the following marks for this course assessment component.

Candidate 1

The candidate was awarded **20 marks**.

Part D – Drama: *The Architect*

Question: Discuss the effectiveness of Grier's presentation of the character of Leo through his interactions with Martin and Sheena.

Understanding

This candidate shows a **comprehensive understanding of the central concerns of the text** and undertakes a **full and relevant exploration with sustained consideration of the implications of the question**. In the opening paragraph of this response, the candidate asserts that 'through ... two sets of interactions – initially with Martin, and then with Sheena, Greig presents the audience with a character whose primary function is pride' and that one character is able 'to accept his pride' and for another 'it stands in their way'. The candidate observes that Leo initially entering with the model is a 'visual representation of Leo's ego' and that 'he carries it upon himself' (page 1 of the response) and also sees Leo's actions in trying to light a cigarette in the wind as another example of Leo 'being consumed by pride' (page 1 of the response) and goes on to state that Leo is 'over-bearing and work obsessed' (page 1 of the response) and believes himself to be 'above others' (page 2 of the response) as a result of his pride.

The candidate goes on to look more specifically at Martin's role in the extract on page 2 of their response when they observe that Martin understands that 'Leo is a character filled with such pride that there is no point in helping' and that when Leo moves into a monologue that 'interruption would be fruitless' (page 2 of the response) as Martin knows his father's ways all too well. Leo's relationship with Martin is also commented upon further when the candidate states that Leo's 'fast wit, and genuinely damning way he regards his son' is indicative of his attitude and that Leo is more interested in 'prov[ing] his own worth' and that this 'overrides any and all emotional attachments he may have' (page 2 of the response) to his son.

On page 3 of the candidate's response, they look at Sheena's appearance, and the fact that she is 'someone who is not sympathetic to [Leo's] idiosyncrasies and who challenges both his opinion of himself, and his pride in his work'. Sheena is seen as a character who 'disrupts the scene' (page 3 of the response) when she

enters and, ultimately, Leo is 'unable to cope with this confrontation to his pride' (page 3 of the response).

The candidate moves on to look to the interactions between Leo, Martin and Sheena, when they comment on Leo's 'failure to prevent Martin altering the model of his work' as an act to 'challenge Sheena's commentary on his work' (page 4 of the response). The candidate then moves to the heart of their reading of the extract by looking at the fact that Leo's 'pride drives him [to] make potentially dangerous and life-threatening decisions' (page 4) and that his 'all consuming' (page 5) pride and the fact that he is 'incapable of changing' (page 5) is a 'potential danger' to all.

In support of the candidate's understanding and subsequent analysis of the extract, there is **an extensive use of textual evidence to support the candidate's argument which is clearly focused on the demands of the question.**

Analysis

The candidate makes reference to a **task-appropriate range of literary techniques and/or features of language** associated with drama such as stage positioning, visual storytelling, motif, dialogue, monologue, narrative tension, foreshadowing, characterisation, mood, and subtext, and this is a strength of this response in that it engages with the technical aspects of the drama and is always aware that this extract is a drama to be performed. Also, the candidate is then able to make a **relevant analysis** of these techniques which **skilfully strengthens the approach adopted by the candidate**. For example, on page 1 of their response, the candidate makes the comment on Leo entering the stage with the model as an early indication that 'Leo is demonstrated to believe himself capable of more than he is, all without the use of dialogue' and they go on to make the comment on the extended monologue by Leo at the beginning of the extract which 'breaks naturalistic dialogue form' where 'Greig has cemented Leo as not only a man who talks 'down' to those around him' but also a father 'who thinks himself above Martin' (page 1). Furthermore, the candidate states that 'Leo resorts to sarcasm and hurtful remarks over kindness' (on page 2 of the response) when talking to his son about his work. And on page 3 the candidate comments on the hard hat episode as an attempt to 'persuade the audience to side with Martin [and] reveal the ridiculousness of Leo's pride above all else.' When Sheena enters the scene and 'disrupts the scene', the candidate then makes an insightful analysis of the 'symmetrical image' of the stage set with two characters [Leo and Martin] now being 'visually at odds' and indicating to 'the audience that this disruption will certainly have consequences.'

A final example of **relevant analysis which skilfully strengthens the approach adopted by the candidate** occurs at the bottom of page 4 where the candidate states that Greig is 'exploit[ing] an instance of subtext' where 'Sheena presents her argument based on facts, coming in carrying papers and petitions, where Leo

roots his within his own emotions' which points to the fact that 'Leo is a character willing to ignore facts in the face of his own pride.'

Evaluation

The candidate has **a committed, clear, evaluative stance with respect to the text provided and the question, and skilfully based on precise evidence discussed within the response**. From early in the response, the candidate makes evaluative comments on Leo's pride and the way 'Greig weaponizes dialogue throughout the piece as the main form through which the action takes place' (page 1) and goes on to state that 'Where before, Leo employed almost over the top dialogue in his use of language and address, now he is a character reduced to stumbling and silence' (page 3 of the response). The candidate also sees that Leo, 'having been totally consumed by his pride, can become the single [sic] focussed in the reservation of his pride – in and of itself a potentially destructive quality' (page 4) and by the final page of the response, the candidate brings their entire reading together when they observe that Leo is driven by pride and is 'incapable of changing' which will 'cement him as a potential danger and a threat to himself and others.'

Range

Since the evidence fully meets the standard described in the 20-19 range, the highest available mark from the range is awarded.

Candidate 2

The candidate was awarded **6 marks**.

Part B – Prose Fiction: *Miss Brill*

Question: Discuss some of the means by which the writer explores different aspects of Miss Brill's isolation.

This textual analysis is constructed in a series of short, bullet-pointed comments. There is an attempt to gather these comments under a series of subheadings which correspond to the bullet points in the rubric, ie characterisation on pages 1 and 2; symbolism on pages 2 and 3; mood on page 3; the final two paragraphs on pages 3 and 4 and 'other' devices on page 4. 'Further analysis' of a range of features is then offered on pages 5, 6 and 7.

Understanding

This textual analysis shows a **limited understanding of the central concerns of the text provided**. There is understanding of the portrayal of Miss Brill as an observer and as an older person who has become 'irrelevant and fizzled out' (page 2 of the candidate response). There is also an understanding of how the writer suggests the passing of time: 'The older couple have now been replaced with the younger and more lively couple' (page 2), and how Miss Brill 'has realised she is old and there is a new generation taking her place'. There is reference to the significance of the interruption to Miss Brill's Sunday routine on page 3 ('breaking tradition'). There are a number of straightforward points made on page 4, which again show no more than a limited understanding of the central concerns, eg 'she is no longer relevant to this community' and 'There are younger, smarter, stronger people who will take her place'.

While there is the occasional glimpse of a better understanding in comments such as 'she is almost living in denial of her isolation' (page 5), the fragmentary and undeveloped nature of so many of the points prevent the textual analysis from demonstrating anything more than a **limited understanding of the central concerns** and a **limited approach to the question**. In addition to this, there are a number of occasions where the central concerns of the text have been misunderstood. 'She is an important/well respected member of the community' (on page 1 of the response) is a good example of this.

Analysis

The analytical comments in this textual analysis are also not really developed beyond a series of bald statements. As a result, only a **limited analysis of literary techniques** is demonstrated at best, even though an attempt is made to deal with a range of such techniques. The comments on characterisation often do not go beyond a brief quotation followed by a brief and rather obvious explanation, eg "Miss Brill had wanted to shake her." She gets annoyed at people who are ungrateful' (on the first page of the candidate's response); 'shows

she's an older woman emphasised more on the word choice of "shabby" (page 1) and "Long time" also once again suggests she is older' (page 2).

There are some comments on the symbolism of the 'cupboard room' and the connection between the music played by the band and the emotions of the characters on the second page of the candidate's response but, again, these do not go beyond **limited** observations.

This pattern continues in the analysis of mood: "And the band sounded louder and gayer." It is a happy time, the sun is out and there is only a little chill' (on page 3 of the response). The analysis of the final two paragraphs on pages 3 and 4 is also fragmentary: 'The first of the two paragraphs are completely wholesome' and 'Second paragraph is more sad.' Once again, these unsupported statements serve to hinder the approach to the task rather than helping it.

Under the heading 'Other' towards the foot of page 4 of the candidate's response there is reference to soliloquy and symbolism and this is followed by further comments on techniques including characterisation, symbolism, imagery, word choice and repetition on pages 5, 6 and 7 but again there is either **very little** analysis or the analysis tends not to go beyond **limited** ('Third wheel'; "Cupboard" shows that it's too small even for one person. She lives alone'; 'word choice of 'end' creates a change of Miss Brill being shoved off to the end'; 'The repetition shows this fur and community means a lot to her.' Some comments, however, are more successful, eg ". . . dim little eyes.' She knows her fur is old, but she is oblivious to the fact that she too is getting old' (page 4 of the response).

Evaluation

A degree of evaluation can be detected implicitly within the analysis offered in this response but the lack of development in the points made makes it difficult for a coherent evaluation of the text to be demonstrated. There is **very little** explicit evaluative comment in the response apart from the occasional example such as 'The thing that makes her overjoyed is finding an almond in said cake. The simplicity is heartbreaking' (on page 6 of the response).

Range

This textual analysis just meets the standard described in the 9-6 mark range and so is awarded the lowest mark from that range.