

Commentary on candidate evidence

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

Candidate 1

Question 7

Choose a scene or sequence from a film or TV drama which is exciting or shocking or sad. By referring to appropriate techniques, explain how this effect is created.

The candidate was awarded **19 marks** for this essay.

Summary

The candidate has chosen to answer question 7 from the Film and Television Drama section, using *Shutter Island* by Martin Scorsese. The candidate selects the opening sequence of the film and constructs a line of thought about how the director has created a shocking opening. The candidate maintains this consistently relevant line of thought throughout the essay.

Understanding/relevance

The candidate demonstrates a high degree of familiarity with the opening sequence, addressing many elements that contribute to the effective opening scene and linking these elements effectively to the demands of the question; for example: 'the mirror could symbolise some sort of mental health disorder such as split personality, and therefore continuing the feeling of shock' (paragraph 4).

The candidate has a very good understanding of the complexity present in the film's portrayal of the main character: 'This is because the audience realise that the director has hinted from the start that the main character is in fact two characters, but one man who is deluding himself into the character that we are first introduced to' (paragraph 2).

The candidate demonstrates a very good understanding of the central concerns of the text: 'they (the audience) find out that it is just one big experiment to help the main character to deal with his guilt and denial' (paragraph 6).

The candidate shows a very good understanding of the central concerns of the text and the line of thought is consistently relevant throughout, but this does get a touch repetitive as the essay goes on.

Analysis/evaluation

Analysis is the real strength of the essay, and the candidate demonstrates a thorough awareness of techniques. There is analysis of character, shot selection,

camera angle, symbolism, sound, the use of colour, dialogue, flashback, etc. Much of this analysis is thoughtful, for example: 'the fog is very disorientating. It could also symbolise the character's state of mind: Teddy Daniels is lost in his own guilt and denial' (paragraph 3).

Analysis is strengthened by well-chosen references, and the candidate demonstrates evaluation by addressing the effects of techniques on the audience: 'As the two characters speak, a wide-angle camera shot of the island is shown. This shocks the audience as the island looks creepy, isolated and desolated' (paragraph 8).

Critical terminology is used confidently: 'What also sets the atmosphere is that the audience notice colour manipulation: the sky, sea and the dreary costumes the two characters wear are all monotone' (paragraph 5).

However, the analysis does become slightly less thorough towards the end of the essay, with the occasional example of a technique not fully explored. For example: 'To help set the tone, Martin Scorsese has also increased the music as they make the journey to Ashecliffe' (paragraph 11).

Structure/accuracy

The candidate demonstrates a line of thought which very clearly adheres to the demands of the question.

Overall

This is a very detailed essay which demonstrates that the candidate has a very good understanding of the film. The candidate is able to explain the operation of characterisation, how techniques are used to create particular effects, and the impact these techniques have on the audience.

Overall, the candidate deals with the demands of the question in a thorough and precise manner. As such, it was placed in the middle of the 18-20 range and awarded **19 marks**.

Candidate 2

Question 6

Choose a poem which creates a memorable mood or atmosphere.

By referring to appropriate techniques, explain how the poet creates this mood or atmosphere.

The candidate was awarded **12 marks** for this essay.

Summary

The candidate has chosen to answer question 6 from the Poetry section, using *In Mrs Tilscher's Class* by Carol Ann Duffy. The candidate addresses the key terms of the question in paragraph 1: 'This poem creates a memorable mood and atmosphere as it goes from one extreme to another.' This is a relevant statement, but it is not explained further at this stage in the response.

Understanding/relevance

The candidate has shown some familiarity with the text as a whole. The response outlines the speaker's early memories of being in class and charts progression towards adulthood: 'Stanza 3 becomes more interesting as the kids start to become more tempted by the outside world and some of their innocence disappears' (paragraph 4). Some understanding of the central concerns of the text is demonstrated throughout this paragraph of the candidate's response, for example: '...the child's innocence has been shattered and the outside world is creeping in...' (paragraph 4).

Throughout the essay, the candidate makes fairly frequent reference to the wording of the question. The candidate's line of thought is therefore 'mostly relevant to the task' in that it is done in a mechanistic way, without detailed commentary, for example: 'In Stanza 2 the mood and atmosphere stayed the same' (paragraph 3).

Analysis/evaluation

An awareness of the writer's techniques is shown throughout the response, for example on word choice: 'The word "glowed" has connotations of bright and colourful whilst giving us an image of a bright multi-coloured classroom' (paragraph 3). The candidate later attempts an explanation of the use of pathetic fallacy: 'This is also representing all of the kids feelings during this time and the weather creates a dark an caotic atmosphere' (paragraph 5).

Making an overall judgement on the level of analysis, the candidate could not be said to demonstrate a 'sound awareness' of techniques, only 'an awareness.' Explanation often lacks detail, for example: "'This was better than home" which is an innocent comment but this was said out of happiness as they all enjoyed their lesson' (paragraph 3), and "'a xylophones noise" gives us connotations of kids in the background playing with instruments and having fun' (also paragraph 3).

Some evaluative comments are made and are supported by appropriate references, for example: 'the atmosphere changed and the electricity and thunderstorm really represented the children at this time' (paragraph 6).

Structure/accuracy

The candidate communicates a line of thought at first reading. The language used is sufficiently accurate.

Overall

The candidate displays some familiarity with the text as a whole and shows some understanding of the central concerns. There is an awareness of the writer's techniques (eg word choice, pathetic fallacy), and some commentary, but this is not developed into detailed explanation.

All of the indicators point to the 13-10 mark range. The response does go beyond 'mostly relevant' at times, and this together with a few slightly stronger, relevant, comments, such as 'the child's innocence has been shattered and the outside world is creeping in creating a dull and sad atmosphere' (paragraph 4), result in the essay being placed in the top half of the 13-10 range. It was awarded **12 marks**.

Candidate 3

Question 9

Choose an example of language which is concerned with persuading you to make a purchase, or to agree with a point of view.

By referring to specific examples, explain how persuasive language is used in an effective way.

The candidate was awarded **16 marks** for this essay.

Summary

The candidate has selected the text of Marcus Rashford's letter to MPs on the subject of free school meals and child poverty in response to question 9 from the Language section.

Understanding/relevance

The candidate has shown familiarity with the text as a whole. This is achieved through a series of direct quotations which are used as a key component of the response. For example: 'Rashford writes "9 out of 30 children in a classroom have been impacted by food hunger." This is highly effective as that's putting the MPs into the perspective on how bad food poverty and child hunger has become, he is wanting change to be made' (paragraph 2).

Good understanding of the central concerns is definitely present in the above example and throughout the essay. The candidate understands the power of Rashford's key message and its impact on readers: 'This is making us agree with Marcus' point of view that change is needed' (paragraph 3).

The line of thought is relevant to the task. The candidate sticks tightly to the key demands of the question. There is no irrelevant material.

Analysis/evaluation

This is not as strong as the response's understanding and relevance. There are a good number of appropriate references, and some are given detailed explanation, but there is nothing in the response that could be considered as showing a 'thorough awareness of the writer's techniques,' or 'a very detailed/thoughtful explanation of stylistic devices' (from the 20-18 mark range).

The candidate analyses the writer's use of the second person, using an appropriate quotation: "I have received thousands of tweets that you should read." Rashford is speaking directly to the MPs instructing them to read these tweets from families experiencing or who have experienced food poverty and child hunger. What he is trying to do is show the level of poverty the children and families are at and make an important change to them' (paragraph 3).

Again, using an appropriate quotation, the candidate analyses the use of a rhetorical question: 'Secondly Rashford writes that "do you know difficult it is for a

man to step forward and say I can't cope." The use of a rhetorical question is highly effective as he is explaining that its tough to see fathers struggle...Rashford uses this to explain to MPs that even the toughest men are struggling and even there seeking help' (paragraph 4). Here, an appropriate quotation supports a reasonably detailed explanation and commentary.

Structure/accuracy

The candidate communicates a line of thought at first reading. The language used is sufficiently accurate. There are a few errors present, but these can be explained by exam time pressures and the lack of an opportunity to re-draft.

Overall

The candidate clearly shows familiarity with Marcus Rashford's text, and there is a good understanding of its central concerns.

Appropriate quotations from the text are a strong feature of the response, but the analysis/evaluation is detailed and reasonably developed rather than 'thoughtful' and 'well-developed.'

Strong understanding together with less developed analysis places the response in the middle of the 17-14 mark range; the strength of understanding shown takes it into the top half of the mark range. It was awarded **16 marks**.