

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 8695/22
Writing

Key messages

- Candidates should manage their time carefully, allocating an equal amount of time for each section of the paper. Candidates need to allocate a set amount of time to: identifying factors for writing; planning to write; writing; proofreading.
- When reading the questions, candidates should concentrate on the instructions and should carefully deconstruct the question, perhaps underlining key instructions. For example, in **Question 1** the key instruction is to 'write the opening of a story', creating a sense of 'excitement and anticipation'.
- Effective planning, following on from successful interpretation of the question (as above), leads to better crafted and well-shaped responses, therefore minimising irrelevant detail and generic content.
- During the planning stage, candidates should consider the following: the *purpose* of the piece, the prescribed *form* and *audience* as well as the most appropriate *voice* or *persona* to adopt, the *mood* and *tone* that they should try to create in their writing and the most suitable *structure* to employ.
- One key aspect of the most successful and effective writing in **Section A** is a convincing and credible narrator/persona. Key aspects of the most successful and effective writing in **Section B** are a clearly developed, logically sequenced structure, together with an authentic sense of voice.
- Candidates must understand the importance of writing in clear, properly punctuated English, with accurate sentence demarcation. Clear expression in simple and compound sentences without much variety is preferable to expression that does not flow easily in long, rambling sentences.
- Candidates must also be aware of the need for correct spelling and paragraphing in their responses, including paragraphing for direct speech.
- Candidates should be encouraged to proofread carefully, particularly for accurate sentence demarcation and for tense confusion/inconsistency. Such errors impede, sometimes seriously, the overall sense of fluency and cohesion.
- In preparing for **Section A**: Imaginative writing, candidates should develop skills in differentiating between 'showing' versus 'telling', to improve both descriptive and narrative skills.
- When preparing for **Section B**: Writing for an audience, candidates should be encouraged to read a wide variety of newspaper and magazine articles as background preparation. Candidates should be exposed to the tone, register and format of these texts, as well as of speeches and voiceover scripts.

General comments

Technical accuracy tended to be more secure in **Section B** than in **Section A**, where tense errors and confusions often caused problems. **Section B** responses were also often structured more effectively than **Section A**. It may, therefore, be appropriate to advise candidates to attempt their chosen **Section B** task before their **Section A** task.

Quite a number of submissions self-penalised on the grounds of rubric infringement: some essays were appreciably short of the minimum word limit. Responses that either fall short of the minimum word limit or exceed the maximum are unlikely to form full, well-rounded pieces, or to meet Mark Scheme criteria relating to structure. Candidates should practise writing time-limited tasks to a specific word length.

For **Section A**, strong responses were those with an original flavour and a convincing sense of place, character or atmosphere. For example, the reader was able to feel a sense of excitement and anticipation in the story in **Question 1**; appreciate the contrasting outlook and mood of the two diary entries in **Question 2**; or visualise the sound, movement and colour in **Question 3**. Where some candidates fell down in their imaginative writing, it was often due to issues related to structural control (for example, an entire piece written as one paragraph), or to the use of suitable language devices to create effects. A number of answers were hampered by tense confusions, especially when attempting to create drama or a sense of time passing in **Question 1**. Candidates should be encouraged to utilise one main tense in their stories.

The more successful **Section B** answers kept the target audience in mind throughout and adopted language and structural techniques to match that audience. Elements that could be improved in weaker responses are the use of the conventions of different forms, the ability to establish a mature, credible voice, and the development of a well thought out, logically organised line of argument.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Imaginative writing

Question 1 – Story opening

Write the opening of a story called *Setting Off*, about an expedition which has taken many months to prepare for. In your writing, create a sense of excitement and anticipation.

The word ‘expedition’ was understood by the majority of candidates, although a small number interpreted this as ‘exhibition’ and wrote about preparing to exhibit artwork at a gallery.

Stronger candidates produced some lively pieces of writing, choosing to write about expeditions ranging from trips into space and mountain climbing to tracing a family tree. Some showed a sense of enjoyment as they planned for a gap year with friends, sometimes focusing their attention on a strong opening by communicating immediately a sense of purpose: ‘Months and months of gruelling hard work and planning has finally come to pass. The exhilaration and excitement thrumming through my veins promises an experience for the books. It will be an adventure of a lifetime.’

Weaker candidates often wrote about a normal holiday rather than specifically about an exhibition. Some candidates over-emphasised the preparation aspect of the question, never quite communicating a sense of excitement. For example, they often produced accounts of packing for a holiday and going to the airport, needing to provide more of an insight into the narrator’s emotions. Where others demonstrated that they had a good story they wanted to tell, they needed to make sure that they linked their story solidly to the question.

Question 2 – Contrasting diary entries

Write two contrasting diary entries (300–450 words each): the first by a teacher on his first day of work; and the second by the same teacher on his last day of work before retirement. In your writing, create a sense of outlook and mood.

In most cases contrast in voice and tone was managed well. Stronger candidates produced some very realistic and sympathetic portrayals of a teacher’s life and of the irritating sets of behaviours exhibited by students. They often communicated a positive and heart-warming image of the teaching profession and a fondness for their teachers. They also used a more mature voice in the second diary entry, to provide contrast. One candidate created a clear sense of mood in the second diary entry: ‘I thought about how much I had changed as a person. From an impatient, nervous and timid teacher I turned into a confident, assertive and patient person. As I walked out of the gate for the last time, my journey as a teacher came to an end.’ One of the most striking retirement day entries achieved a sense of outlook and mood through symbolism: ‘The classroom seemed dull. My desk had lost its shine over the past thirty years [...]. The lesson bell rang for one last time.’ Another strong candidate used subtle observations to highlight the passage of time: he had been held up on his way to school on his first morning by an anti-apartheid demonstration and had later been given directions to his classroom by a tall blonde colleague. On his last day the woman he bumped into in the corridor now had grey hairs amongst the blond ones and was his wife; his favourite student, who was helping him to pack up his possessions, was a girl who would not have been permitted to enter the school at the time of the demonstration which had delayed him on his first day.

Weaker candidates dwelt too much on going through morning preparations in the first entry, and sometimes the second as well. Typically the young teachers were full of high hopes of moulding their students into upright citizens; they were apprehensive on their first day, and met with some disobedience and hostility in the classroom; then on the last day the retiree was sad to leave the school, had become deeply attached to the students, and was given a fond farewell by both students and colleagues. Candidates should note that work in the top two bands of the Mark Scheme will be 'imaginative', and 'possibly original' in the very top band.

Question 3 – Descriptive writing

Write a descriptive piece called *The Crowd*. In your writing, create a sense of atmosphere, and focus on sound, movement and colour to help your reader imagine the scene.

Most candidates were able to picture the required sound, movement and colour effects. Many candidates used a narrative frame or a single person's perspective, which worked well in cases where the focus of the piece remained descriptive.

Stronger candidates often wrote from their own experience and were able to write evocatively about the crowd at a sporting event, a music festival, a train station, a national celebration or a protest. Stronger candidates focused on specific people within the crowd, incorporating the elements of sound, movement and colour in a subtle way, producing an effective descriptive piece. One candidate described the crowd at a music festival, giving the crowd a sense of identity: 'The noise of the crowd was deafening. It was like watching an angry ocean in a violent storm. The lights flickered furiously in a mix of colours.' Others took an imaginative approach such as a musician looking out at the crowd, or a bird's eye view of lunch time in a school cafeteria, with the focus on a student attempting to navigate his way through a queue in an attempt to get food.

Weaker candidates often descended into narrative about going to an event, and lost focus on the crowd by describing the event itself. Others utilised fictional sources such as zombie apocalypse films, fantasy or medieval battles and were often plot-driven rather than a deliberate presentation of apt descriptive details. A number of weaker candidates had attempted to enhance the descriptive quality of their writing by using fragmented sentences; in fact, appropriate sentence demarcation would have been a much more effective aid in achieving the effects which the vocabulary selection was intended to create. Candidates should be wary of overusing the continuous present tense, which can result in non-standard, often unclear sentence construction.

Section B: Writing for an audience

Question 4 – Article for school website

In class, you have been discussing whether it is a good idea to take a year off from formal education before going to university. Write an article for your school website about the pros and cons of taking a 'gap year'.

This question produced many responses which showed clear engagement with the topic. Cultural influences made a big difference to what people thought, as in some countries it seems to be an indication of failure, as you may only have a gap year if you need to improve your exam marks. In other countries there was a big fear of being a year behind their contemporaries. Others considered a gap year as an opportunity to mature and gain life experience that helps people to be confidently independent and to focus on their studies once they start university.

Stronger candidates used a wide range of rhetorical devices and some showed cleverness with headings, thus really focusing attention on the school website audience. Effective sub-headings included: 'The Brain Break', 'You jumped off the train', 'Zero Funding' and 'The Nothing Gap'. Many responses were lively and entertaining and often took into account the differing views of teachers, peers and parents. Such responses had a good sense of the audience for this task, adopting an appropriately informal style, often with an effective opening, such as in this example: 'Seven years of primary school, plus five years of high school, then four years of university, then work until retirement. This is the way society has structured our lives. What if you could choose to slow life down to catch your breath before whizzing on to the next chapter? Enter the gap year.'

Weaker candidates mainly listed pros and cons and often needed more balance in their approach. Many had an extreme take on the cons of taking a gap year, with visions of candidates falling into organised crime and generally dissolute behaviour; such views were difficult to support.

Question 5 – Contrasting reviews

A new luxury hotel has recently been built in an old part of your town. Write two contrasting reviews (300–450 words each) of the hotel: one praising it, and the other criticising it.

Stronger candidates clearly focused on a review form, providing personal comment on the hotel and its amenities. Where candidates connected the location of the new building being in the old part of the town, it gave them more to say, both negatively (for example, the new business was ruining existing local businesses), and positively (for example, this would be a boost to the local economy). There were two different and equally valid approaches to this question: first, the alleged advantages of resurrecting an old and stagnant area with new energy and employment for locals, as against the discrepancy between a posh and tasteless edifice totally out of keeping with the old but culturally rich area where it was situated, driving out local businesses and staffed by outsiders; second, details of a stay by a guest and what each experienced. Some stronger candidates mixed both elements. One candidate enthused: 'Oh what joy it brings me to see new life injected back into this old town! We have not had a new building or new infrastructure set up in our humble town for years!' Another writer was less than impressed: 'The receptionists greet you with a distant glare with a hint of glee. Not to mention the tantalizing array of breakfast choices; a beige semi-fluid with a white blob floating is supposed to be the early morning drink to keep the gears turning.'

Weaker candidates adopted a list-like approach, providing a tour of the hotel, sometimes after a lengthy prologue detailing travel to the hotel. A significant number of weaker candidates wrote essays, rather than reviews, thus falling short of the requirements of the question. Elements that one would expect to be incorporated into a review include mention of the hotel facilities and comment on them, and offering advice to readers.

Question 6 – Speech

Your headteacher has asked you to give a speech to your year group about a free-time activity that you are very good at. Write the text of the speech. In your writing, create a sense of enthusiasm for the activity and a desire to share this enthusiasm with others.

Candidates who selected this question dealt with a wide variety of activities, from belly dancing, surfing, fishing, baking and yoga to reading, acting, singing and listening to music.

Stronger candidates used a range of rhetorical devices to engage the audience, many beginning their responses with a rhetorical question. They adopted a motivational tone with suitably emotive language; they thoughtfully explained how the activity helped them get through stressful study for exams or difficulty in forming friendships and were very encouraging towards others wanting to take up the interest. Better responses outlined, for example, the benefits of eating healthily, challenging oneself and persevering in difficult situations. They also provided relevant information to reinforce their arguments with claims about improvement in mental health and academic achievement. Many of these stronger candidates wrote from experience, which gave their speeches an authentic feeling. One candidate wrote about drumming: 'It is a fantastic form of catharsis and can help to relieve stress and anxiety. The drums can speak when you cannot.' For another, who had suffered a number of personal problems, running was a fix-all cure. Others wrote about volunteering, with strong conviction: 'Through my free time activity I am able to have a social, economical and environmental impact to the people living in various communities. Do we not want to be the reason for change? Do we not want to help others in need? Do we not want to be proud of something we have achieved?'

Weaker speeches needed more structural attention. They often gave long lists of necessary equipment or wrote about the minutiae of the rules of the game. In many cases it was apparent that candidates would have done better to have written about an activity they were familiar with. For example, cooking was a popular choice, but where candidates made little reference to the process of cooking their speech became less persuasive.

LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Paper 8695/92
Poetry, Prose and Drama

Key messages

The examination is designed to assess the understanding and appreciation of literary composition and expression, so candidate responses should focus on how authors' choices of language and literary methods shape meaning.

- Answers which focus primarily on the content of texts can only achieve marks in the lower bands of the Mark Scheme.
- Points in essays should be supported with specific references and quotations. This should be particularly remembered for the **(a)** questions, where candidates select their own material to answer the question.
- Successful essays develop a line of argument in response to the question, developing points to a conclusion.
- Answers to **(b)** passage questions should examine the writing of the selected poem or passage in considerable detail.

General comments

In its final appearance on the syllabus, the selected poems of Elizabeth Jennings attracted a limited number of answers, but all other texts had been studied widely and attracted a range of responses. The most successful answers to **(a)** questions used detailed knowledge of the texts to support their points, including secure references and apt quotations, to establish and develop a clear argument in response to the question. Successful responses to **(b)** questions looked in great detail at the writing of the selected passage or poem, considering the effects of the writers' choices of language, imagery and structure. Good answers often placed the extract within the context of the wider text in the cases of prose and drama, in order to inform the discussion of the passage. Candidates who relied on narrative summary and paraphrase indicated their knowledge of the content of texts and passages, but in order to achieve marks in the higher bands of the Mark Scheme they needed to demonstrate understating of the writers' methods.

Question specific comments 9695/32

Question 1

Robert Frost: Selected Poems

- (a)** While candidates often chose appropriate poems, such as 'The Sound of Trees', 'Mending Wall', 'Stopping By Woods on a Snowy Evening' and 'The Wood-Pile', they needed to pay attention to the question's focus on the presentation of landscape, rather than writing generally about the poems. Poem choices such as 'Home Burial' and 'The Ax-Helve', where landscape features fleetingly if at all, proved problematic in terms of producing a successful response to the question posed. Successful answers looked at Frost's presentation of hills, trees, undergrowth and the earth itself, and considered the response to those elements of landscape by the speaker of each poem.
- (b)** This proved to be a very popular question which prompted some very strong responses. The most successful answers moved from the physical experience of the camp to the spiritual with some

confidence and some precise selection of detail. While some insisted that the speaker is Frost himself, many wrote well on his creation of the speaker, a thoughtful, educated wanderer, noting his self-denigration in 'just a tramp'. Essays often showed some thoughtful focus on the language of the poem, including the presentation of the speaker's camp under the 'juniper' and its balance of comfort and discomfort. Many wrote well on the epiphany on seeing 'the largest firedrop' and his sense of superiority because he has seen it directly, not 'through a rusty screen'. There were a few comments on the epistolary form of the poem. Many responses would have been improved had they included discussion of the poem's structure. There was some thoughtful engagement with the way Frost characterises the speaker, with the occasional suggestion that both tramp and farmer are versions of Frost himself, the letter representing the poet's internal debate.

Question 2

Elizabeth Jennings: Selected Poems

- (a) There were too few responses to this question to make a general comment appropriate.
- (b) Many candidates found this an accessible poem, most demonstrating sound understanding of the central concern with the relationship. Some essays showed sensitive appreciation of the presentation of the distance between father and son through the father's voice. Thoughtful candidates commented on the neutral quality of the word 'house', the simile of 'strangers' and the presence of 'Silence'. The image of the 'prodigal' was well understood and there was some subtle discussion of the use of the subjunctive in 'I would forgive him'. Some candidates grasped the nuances of the characterisation of the father in the second half of the poem, including the poignancy of the 'empty hand' in the penultimate line. A few candidates were able to discuss structure thoughtfully, often interpreting Jennings' tight regular stanzas as a method of indicating controlled emotion.

Question 3

Songs of Ourselves Volume 2

- (a) There were very few responses to this question, with those candidates opting for it choosing such poems as 'The Uncles', 'The Migrant', 'On My First Daughter', 'The Forsaken Wife' and 'Death'. Where descriptions of the particular characters made for responses at the weaker end, stronger responses focused on presentation and showed how the poem's language and structure characterised the speaker or subject.
- (b) This was the most popular question on the paper and nearly all candidates found something interesting to say about the poem. The poem is not, in fact, about boys going off to war, but this reading was taken by many candidates and can be supported by careful interpretation of some of the poem's language and imagery. However, in many cases, the reading was simply imposed without looking at the poem for support, which led to limited and rather skewed essays. Stronger and more sensitive accounts of the poem read it as a description of a moment where a parent recognises that children will leave the safety and security of the family to make their own way in the world, and that part of being a parent is to accept that inevitable sense of loss. This led to some interesting comments on the emphasis on departure created by the comma in the title, on the 'hedges' representing both confinement and protection, and on the limitless and possibly dangerous possibilities of adulthood in the 'empty air', 'torn clouds' and 'Haphazard world'. The inevitability of departure was seen in 'the steadiness/of their retreating footfalls' and 'their walk was one-dimensional, and final'. Some thoughtful candidates suggested a sense of hope, in that the 'clear and blond' heads, suggestive of youth and innocence, become 'sunlit points' and a 'certain focus' – although the sons will leave to make their own life, they will remain in the parent's eye.

Question 4

E.M. Forster: *Howards End*

- (a) Responses to this question often showed evidence of detailed knowledge of the novel, with stronger essays considering a range of women, including Ruth Wilcox and Jacky, who provide interesting contrasts in role with the Schlegels. In different ways, these two characters are shown to accept the status quo for women, especially with regard to their relationships with men. Answers focusing just on Margaret and Helen often still demonstrated useful understanding of how Forster

creates comparisons and contrasts between the sisters. Candidates could have made more use of the cue quotation to shape the argument explicitly in response to the question.

- (b) There were many answers to the passage on Margaret's and Henry's marriage and they varied widely. On the one hand, some candidates wrote of the marriage as a perfect romantic union, missing the ironic tone of Forster's narrative; others railed against Margaret's abandonment of feminist principle in marrying Wilcox, again overlooking some of the subtleties of the extract. Many essays were thoughtful and focused on Forster's use of different perspectives in the extract. There were comments on the author's ironic presentation of 'our hero and heroine', while the presentation of the understated marriage ceremony was successfully explored by some candidates, focusing on its 'quiet' nature and as something Margaret had to 'go through'. The 'colourless refreshments', as well as the lack of music (which Margaret loved), were seen as lacklustre and the honeymoon, characterised by such language as 'reliable', 'failed' and 'disappointed', was also seen as uncharacteristic of this supposedly happy time. There were also thoughtful comments on Howard's End being used 'as a warehouse', showing a disconnection of values between Margaret and Henry. Some noted that the reasons for Helen's retreat become apparent later in the novel and those few candidates who focused on the details of the two paragraphs on Mr Wilcox at the end of the passage found much to discuss, often registering shock at the apparently subservient nature of Margaret, responding to his 'call' and 'ready to do what he wished'.

Question 5

Andrea Levy: *Small Island*

- (a) Most essays on this question showed a good knowledge of the novel and candidates were able to select suitable characters and episodes to illustrate the points made. Queenie was often seen as the key exception to general attitudes of the British towards immigrants, welcoming them into her lodgings and giving further welcome to Michael, though thoughtful responses pointed out that she still holds prejudiced views, noted in her early patronising of Hortense. Queenie was effectively contrasted with Bernard and Mr Todd, while other candidates referred to episodes with American soldiers and Gilbert's and Hortense's attempts to gain work, while many candidates noted the prevalence of racism is the reason for Queenie giving away her baby at the end of the novel.
- (b) More successful answers on the passage identified ways in which Levy creates a contrast in the first paragraph between before and after the bombing, specifically 'lulled drowsy' and 'kip in Armageddon'. Other candidates noted the use of dialogue to dramatise the effects of the bombing, picking out the warden's disorientation, and such metaphors as 'the displaced intestines of buildings', presenting the ravaged buildings as bodies. There were useful comments on the verbs used by Levy, such as 'Coughing', 'spewing', 'teetering', 'gushing', 'crunching', giving Queenie's narration its characteristic vigour. Some well-developed responses noted the passage's development, moving from the physically ruined city buildings to the lost and bereft people in the classroom, trying to negotiate their way through official bureaucracy while dispossessed of everything. Answers which relied on narrative summary or paraphrase showed knowledge of the content of the passage but missed the many opportunities to explore the details of Levy's writing in the excerpt.

Question 6

Stories of Ourselves

- (a) The most popular pairing of stories for this question was 'The Destroyers' with 'The Taste of Watermelon', though other stories used by candidates included 'How it Happened', 'The Rain Horse', 'The Hollow of Three Hills' and 'Elephant', though it has to be said that some of these latter choices lent themselves less successfully to fruitful discussion. 'The Destroyers' provided plenty of opportunity for candidates to explore the presentation of violent actions, which they achieved with care and meticulousness. This paired well with 'The Taste of Watermelon', as both stories explore the central characters' desire for acceptance within a peer group. Explicit descriptions of violent acts were closely discussed in some cases, with some essays analysing the boys' destruction of the watermelon as similar to the physical abuse of a human being with 'knife penetrated', meat muddled' and 'scattered seed'. The unconscious role of the lorry driver providing the *coup de grâce* after the boys' preparation in 'The Destroyers' was noted, while some candidates recalled the stages of the crashing vehicle in 'How it Happened' in impressive detail.

- (b) While Examiners saw a number of essays which presented a view that the father in 'The Fly in the Ointment' is a caring and sensitive parent, most focused clearly on his inconsistencies, with some detailed examination of his 'two faces'. Strong answers looked carefully at the ways in which Pritchett presents these two different sides of the father, noting the contrast between 'soft warm and [...] innocent' and 'shrewd, scared and hard'. They also noted the son's response, as he 'leaned back' when his father 'leaned forward' and many saw a self-destructiveness in the father's work ethic, greed and self-deception. Candidates who were alert to detail picked up how his deceptive appearance is emphasised by his 'smiling' 'waistcoat', 'easy coat' and 'legs', the image confirmed with the deceptive 'winks of light on the shining shoes'. Much attention was paid to the dialogue, considering the imperatives in the father's speech, his claims for himself and his denigration of his son.

Question 7

Wole Soyinka: *Death and the King's Horseman*

- (a) Among the small number of answers to this question were several which were built on a misunderstanding of the wording – some candidates wrote about Simon Pilkings's relationships with various other characters in the play, whereas the question was asking specifically about the presentation of the relationship between Simon Pilkings and his wife Jane Pilkings. Those essays which were correctly focused recognised the differentiation Soyinka makes in the characterisation of the two: Simon Pilkings is presented as a traditional, and rather ignorant, colonial officer, while his wife has a greater degree of understanding and respect for the indigenous people under her husband's jurisdiction. Both, however, lack full empathy and understanding, which Soyinka makes plain as the play develops. Strong answers were secure and well supported with appropriate references to different scenes.
- (b) In most, but not all, cases, candidates demonstrated an understanding and appreciation of the comedy of this scene, as well as the political points made in it. These responses were often lively and interesting in their engagement with the passage and there was some strong understanding of tone and of the way the girls mock Amusa (especially the 'Yessir!' moment), with some very apt references to the wider text to show more developed understanding of how well the girls grasp Amusa's role. There was appreciation of the description of him as 'a rather faithful ox' and perceptive appreciation of ways in which the girls' dialogue captures the diction and tone of the colonists, with phrases such as 'teeny-weeny', 'old chap' and 'by golly' while revealing their awareness of the racist attitudes of the English. Stronger answers looked at the change of mood towards the end of the extract and the strength of the girls as they drive Amusa from their territory with their assertive tone in lines 65–67.

Question 8

William Shakespeare: *Henry IV, Part 2*

- (a) There were few answers to this question, usually focussing on the rebels. The characters were described, with some account of the grievances which make them disloyal. For higher reward, candidates needed to pay more sustained attention to Shakespeare's dramatic presentation.
- (b) The few responses to this question showed some knowledge of Falstaff's character and ways in which it is developed in the given scene. Candidates who were aware of the context commented on the easy nature of his capture of Colville, which he tries to aggrandise to Prince John. Most focused primarily on Falstaff's soliloquy, and his immediate dismissal of Prince John as a 'young sober-blooded boy' whose character is the antithesis of Falstaff's own. The details of his praise of 'sherris' would repay careful discussion, which along with close examination of the speech would make for a strong response. Weaker essays relied on loose summary and paraphrase.

Question 9

Brian Friel: *Philadelphia, Here I Come!*

- (a) Candidates who chose this question clearly knew the play but often relied on listing the various attractions of America which Gar anticipates, rather than going into the details of the writing. The small number of candidates who paid attention to the 'in what ways and with what effects' part of the question wrote effectively about the interactions between Private and Public, the visit of Gar's

aunt and the role plays and songs which punctuate the play. A few sensitive responses also discussed ways in which Friel suggests that Gar has doubts about emigrating.

- (b)** Candidates usually discussed this interaction between Private and Public successfully, analysing the depiction of Gar through the language of the dialogue and the stage directions. They noted the comic vengeance in the over-salting of the pollock and the energetic sequence of role plays shared between Public and Private. Several candidates noted the childishness of the pretences themselves, as well as the accompanying dialogue such as the machine gun imitation and 'Yip-eeeeee!' and 'Ya-hooooo!' Some thoughtful responses suggested that the sheer energy and playfulness of the scene are in themselves signs of Gar's doubts about emigration – a shield to cover his anxieties, more closely revealed in the final sketch of Public being questioned at the border post by Private, despite the jokes.