EASTERN CAPE
EDUCATION

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2025 NSC CHIEF MARKER'S REPORT

SUBJECT	English Home Language		
QUESTION PAPER	P1	P2	P3
DURATION OF QUESTION PAPER	2 ½ hours		
PROVINCE	Eastern Cape		
NAME OF THE INTERNAL MODERATOR	B.J. Mountfort		
NAME OF THE CHIEF MARKER	O.M. Giliomee		
DATES OF MARKING	13 November 2025		
HEAD OF EXAMINATION:	Mr Mabona		

SECTION 1: (General overview of Learner Performance in the question paper as a whole)

The paper is fair and typical of a Home Language paper.

The cognitive spread is fair. In many cases, candidates' inadequate linguistic skills and a literal interpretation of the text as well as the questions were to their detriment. This, unfortunately, caused these candidates to miss the nuances in questions. Candidates struggled to develop and substantiate their responses adequately. An ongoing concern is candidates who rely on film versions or pre-learned essays of the novels and dramas to prepare for the exam.

Feedback from candidates and educators on the paper as a whole was favourable. Some comments, though, expressed some concern that, of the novels, *The Portrait of Dorian Gray* has the more challenging essay question.

It is the third year that a new set of poems has been taught and examined. However, it seems as if acquiring resources to teach these poems will be ongoing for a while. It is doubtful, though, that the problem lies solely with inadequate teaching: it is clear that candidates do not (cannot?) read the questions properly in order to provide fully fleshed answers according to the mark allocations. The entry level questions require a statement and a justification or merely two statements. Questions requiring an interpretation of imagery proved challenging as many candidates EITHER completely missed the image in question OR merely settled for a literal response (IF they understood the image!) OR merely paraphrased the lines in question. Questions that invited a critical discussion on the diction and/or tone (which are closely connected to the central idea or message) failed to garner the expected critical comment.

The unseen poem was well received by candidates. That might be because the central message has not been asked as a three-mark question. The last two questions rather focused on tone and the effect of repetition, which were far more accessible.

The Picture of Dorian Gray remains the clear favourite choice over *Life of* Pi. This year candidates seemed to struggle with the novel essay questions. It was clear that learners had pre-learnt previous exam questions. If those answers had merely been regurgitated, candidates missed the gist of this year's questions and, therefore, did not engage with the topic. It is to the candidates' detriment to decide beforehand which contextual and which essay question they would answer, as it seems as if the novel contextual questions were slightly more accessible than the essay questions. The majority of candidates who offer *The Picture of Dorian Gray* interpreted the topic as an 'influence question' and, therefore, completely misinterpreted the topic.

In the contextual questions (drama and novel), candidates tend to generalise and not focus their responses on the set extract or line reference when instructed to do so. The 'director' questions in Section C still pose a challenge. Many candidates do not know the text sufficiently. Most candidates still do not provide a justification in context for their responses in order to obtain a third mark. Some candidates still consider facial expression as being part of body language. Facial expression would be very difficult to read from a stage during a performance.   Although an improvement has been noted, many candidates are still not clear on what it means to place an extract in context and merely paraphrase the extract. Perhaps educators need clarity on the response expected to such a question so that they can prepare candidates accordingly.

It seems as if candidates are uncertain on how to respond to the *instruction words* in lower, middle and higher order questions. This is to their detriment.

SECTION 2: Comment on candidates' performance in individual questions

SECTION A: POETRY

QUESTION 1: POETRY ESSAY QUESTION – "SOLITUDE"

QUESTION 1
General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
This question had slightly better responses than in the past, which is extremely encouraging. However, it seems as if many candidates do not even know the meaning of the poem. This causes chunk quoting, incorrect interpretation of the poem (definitely of the topic) and sometimes even wildly creative responses. Stronger candidates who opt to answer this question do very well. Many candidates still struggle to write a well-structured essay. Just stringing together quotes and random thoughts will not score a good mark.
QUESTION 2
Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.
Weaker candidates still resort to inaccurate paraphrasing or a line-by-line explanation of the poem, instead of engaging with the topic. Many candidates also resort to general moralising, instead of answering what is expected of them: "We must realise we are always alone and life is against us and our friends will only like us if we can give them things and if we can make them happy." This is a clear example of a general/moralising statement that does not engage with the poem, as no reference to any images or lines has been made. Candidates should also not respond in the first person. They are expected to respond to a poem objectively.
QUESTION 3
Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning.
Teachers should encourage candidates to choose this option and give enough practice in identifying and explaining technical aspects like **diction**, **tone**, **structure** and **imagery**. (Many learners expected diction to be asked again. When structure appeared this year, they were caught unawares and did not know how to respond.) Candidates clearly struggled to discuss the structure of "Solitude". Some very creative responses appeared where new poetry structures were invented. It is clear that many candidates have no knowledge of the couplets or the rhyme scheme/rhythm. Some tried to explain and account for the indented line structure but were not very successful. All aspects of the question need not be treated equally. A discussion of IMAGERY will be much longer than the discussion of TONE, for example. Two to three points for each aspect, well discussed, would be enough. The discussion of the different aspects should, ideally, follow the order in which they have been given in the question. Candidates should also be taught how to interpret the topic statement. Teachers should be careful of allowing learners to write poetry essays at home. ChatGPT always ends a poetry essay in a moralising statement. This might teach candidates that moralising is acceptable. However, moralising should be avoided. An objective engagement with the topic and poem is what is required to respond to this question successfully.

Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.

It is encouraging to see that more learners use paragraphs when writing the poetry essay. Most still struggle with writing good introductions and conclusions. Simply restating the topic of the essay is already an improvement on simply starting with the body of the essay. However, a good introduction and conclusion need a well-developed thesis statement.

A good thesis statement for this essay topic might look like this:
In Solitude, Ella Wheeler Wilcox explores how people behave differently towards others during good and bad times. The poet suggests that when people are happy, others want to be around them, but when people are sad, they are left on their own. By using strong imagery, a clear structure and a tone that changes throughout the poem, Wilcox shows that even though people may sometimes feel connected to others, every person must face his deepest feelings alone.

A good conclusion might be:
Wilcox, therefore, makes it clear that people enjoy sharing happiness but often avoid the sadness of others. Through the imagery, structure and changing tone, she shows that loneliness is something everyone must face at some point. The poem reminds the reader that while friends and company might be there in good times, people usually deal with their pain on their own.

Here is an example of an essay that was awarded full marks during the marking session.

"Solitude" by Ella Wheeler Wilcox is a poem which expresses the idea that everyone is ultimately alone on this earth and that human connection is superficial in every form. This essay will discuss this statement by analysing the poem's use of imagery, structure and tone.

The indented lines that appear in every second line of the poem draws attention to the darker side of every relationship. In lines 1 and 2, the second line has an indent. This places emphasis on the statement that people distance themselves when someone experiences heartbreak. The rhyme scheme of the poem has the same effect. The 'abcb' rhyme connects the negative statements and draws attention to them. For instance, lines 2 and 4 both rhyme, which connects the idea that people are ultimately alone in live.

Secondly, the melancholic and cynical tone of the poem brings out that negative theme of loneliness. Lines 13 to 14 have a very depressing, negative tone. The speaker is expressing how you will lose all your friends as soon as your happiness is replaced by woe. That statement has a deeply depressing, emotional tone, which illustrates the fact that friendships are superficial in all forms and that

Marginal annotations:

Good thesis statement

Style error – rephrase: "Solitude" by Ella Wheeler Wilcox is a poem which uses imagery, structure and tone to express the idea that everyone is ultimately alone on this earth and that human connection is superficial in every form.

Concord error

Structure
well discussed

A quote would have been better here.
Links back to topic

Spelling mistake

Phrasing can be improved

Quote the lines

Tone
well discussed

no individual will be able to find comfort in these connections when life gets difficult.

Lastly, the imagery that the speaker uses in the poem only serves to emphasise the idea that all people are alone at the end of the day. The image of the crowded hall in line 17 contrasts with line 18 when the world chooses to avoid those who suffer. The image illustrates an idea that people surround you only when there is success and celebration, hence the image of a "feast". As soon as there is no more food to give and nothing to be celebrated, people are alone and shunned by society.

In conclusion, Wilcox effectively expresses that feeling of abandonment and loneliness by using structure, imagery and tone to emphasise the shallow nature of friendships.

Links to topic

Insert the quote. (This poem has images repeating – two or three images discussed, would suffice.)

Imagery
well discussed

Links to topic

Effective conclusion linking to introduction.

- *In-depth interpretation of topic; excellent understanding of poem*
- *Coherent structure; language, tone and style mature, impressive and correct.*

Content: 6 marks
Structure and language: 4 marks

Marker's notes motivating mark awarded <u>from the rubric</u>.

It is clear that a learner does not need to have a perfect answer to be awarded full marks. Engaging with the topic and discussing all the elements in a structured manner, are sufficient. There have been better essays than this example; however, this essay is good enough. The rubric benefits the candidates, as has been stated in this report for a few years.

Here is another example of a poetry essay. This essay is completely creative, as it does not make reference to the question or the poem. The candidate cannot be credited if the poem has been used as a creative stimilus. Therefore, Content is 0 and Structure and Language is 0.

Introduction:

In this world emotions are things that exist you cannot always be happy and you cannot always be sad and when you are happy people will do all means to make you sad and those people we call friends most of them will disappear without doing something to help but how they need help they want everyone to help but when you need help they won't help you. Welcome to planet earth.

I don't know whether to say everyone or few people but most people when they need help, you are there as a friend to help them but when you ask for help they will just look at you like they don't know you. In this earth or world helping someone, to others it seems like a difficult thing to do and some people changed the moment they asked for help and no one responded and they told their self that they won't help others.

You ask for help to the people they will never help and when you do something bad or something had happened to you that's when you realise you really need help and when they realise it's to late something bad happened and they will start saying that he needed our help and it's late something bad happen.

So that's why I say if you have problems help yourself find solutions of how will you solve your problem because everything has it's own solution but if you don't have solutions and ask someone that really likes you the person who was always there to help you and nowadays you are lucky to have people who really care about you and apriatiate them,

Helping someone is not a bad thing because it might happen that person really needed your help and it's important to check how your loved ones are and make them to be free when you are around, so let's start being united and check each other's feelings.

QUESTION 2: POETRY CONTEXTUAL QUESTION – "IT'S A BEAUTEOUS EVENING"

QUESTION 1
General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
Strong candidates performed relatively well, but many candidates performed poorly in this question. Many learners have limited knowledge of the imagery and theme/message of the poem. The questions followed the structure of the past two years, which seems to have been to the benefit of the candidates. Question 2.4 deviated slightly from the expected pattern, and candidates struggled to score 3 marks. So many learners do not know which part of the poem is the SESTET.   Figures of Speech are still problematic to some candidates, although it is encouraging to see that there is a definite improvement in this area. Some learners still confuse Parts of Speech and Figures of Speech.
QUESTION 2
Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.
In the lower order question (2.1) learners merely described/explained the setting and the lines, instead of answering the question.   Candidates struggled with the middle order questions. It seems as if candidates do not understand what is expected if the question requires them to '[a]ccount for'.   In 2.2 the majority of candidates explained the literal meaning of the word 'nun' instead of discussing how the image relates to the speaker's view in these lines.   In 2.3 candidates should discuss the EFFECTIVENESS of the image. Many candidates merely paraphrased the lines. A discussion on effectiveness should include an explanation of the image and then link this to the implication of the image in context. Please note that 2.3.2 requires candidates to discuss lines 6 – 8 and not just the part identified in 2.3.1.

In 2.4 many learners focused on the octave, instead of the sestet, as the question clearly states. Many candidates failed to understand that the 'realisation to which the poet comes' is the message of the poem. Few learners scored 3 marks as candidates still struggle to offer a critical discussion. When a critical discussion is required, the candidate has to consider all the information and then draw a conclusion which is linked to the text/lines referred to in the question. Merely paraphrasing the lines is not acceptable. Candidates often missed the second or third mark in these scaffolded questions. Merely quoting examples of diction cannot be credited, as the examples given should be linked to the critical discussion.

QUESTION 3

Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning.

Learners need to understand each poem. The theme/message is central to understanding imagery/diction in the poem, as the poet has chosen each word and image deliberately to convey his message. (See Addendum A) Learners should be taught how to interpret question words (consult Addendum B).

QUESTION 4

Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.

Vocabulary seems to be problematic for learners. Many learners thought that 'mighty Being' referred to a sea creature. This image has also been interpreted as the Rapture taking place.
'Abraham's bosom' has even been explained as Abraham's 'bottom' and that showed the candidate that the 'child' was very close to Abraham. The 'child' has also been explained as being Abraham's grandchild. Many candidates thought the child was dead, justifying that "fact" for several lines.
It is imperative that teachers teach the structure of the sonnet. A shocking number of learners do not know which part of the poem forms the sestet.

QUESTION 3: POETRY CONTEXTUAL QUESTION – "POEM OF RETURN"

QUESTION 1

General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?

Learners performed fairly well in the lower order questions. Many learners struggled with 3.4 and simply did not answer the question. Candidates who grasped the gist of the poem answered this question fairly well. This poem has been asked a few times now, and some candidates who studied previous exam questions merely wrote down previous memo answers. The questions are different, though, and previous answers could not score full marks.
Figures of Speech are still a challenge to some learners, although it is encouraging to see that there is a definite improvement in this area. Some candidates still confuse Parts of Speech and Figures of Speech.

QUESTION 2

Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.

In the lower order questions (3.1) learners often failed to identify the speaker's feelings. Merely saying 'he wants to return' is too vague to score a mark. Doing well in Paper 2 depends on how specific a candidate is in an answer.
The majority of learners identified 'Bring me' in 3.2 as an anaphora. That is not what the question requires, though. Candidates are expected to '[a]ccount for' the repetition of the phrase. Candidates should also realise that this is not a language paper, and they cannot be credited if they explain the function of repetition. The answer needs to be linked to the context of the poem. It seems as if candidates do not understand what is expected if the question requires them to '[a]ccount for'. Many learners simply repeated the answer in 3.1.
In 3.3 candidates should discuss the EFFECTIVENESS of the image. Many candidates merely paraphrased the lines. A discussion on effectiveness should include an explanation of the image and then the implication

of the image in context. Please note that 3.3.2 required them to discuss the whole of line 14 and not just the part referred to 3.3.1.

In 3.4 the question is phrased differently from what has become the expected norm. However, TONE and MESSAGE are closely connected, so learners should still have been able to score marks here. Many learners failed to indicate the *changing* tone <u>and then</u> offer a critical discussion. When a critical discussion is required, the candidate has to consider all the information and draw a conclusion which is linked to the text/lines referred to in the question. Merely paraphrasing the lines is not acceptable. Candidates often miss the second or third mark in these scaffolded questions. Merely quoting examples of diction in an attempt to identify tone cannot be credited, as the examples given should be linked to the critical discussion.

QUESTION 3
Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning.
Learners need to understand each poem. The theme/message is central to understanding imagery/diction in the poem, as the poet has chosen each word and image deliberately to convey his message. (See Addendum A) Learners should be taught how to interpret question words (consult Addendum B).

QUESTION 4
Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.
There are three possible tones that could have been used in the discussion. It is important to note that stating the third tone first and then jumping back to the first tone cannot be credited. A response like that is not logical as a change moves from a starting point to an end point – or the changed tone – and should be indicated and discussed in that order. A critical discussion is not merely an explanation of the tones. Candidates need to engage with the changing tone in the context of the poem – and the message has to be part of the answer. The message informs the change in tone. Candidates need to be taught how to answer higher order questions. It is not an easy feat. If teachers try to formulate an answer first – without consulting the memorandum – they will realise that this is a skill that does not come naturally to average and weaker learners. They need to be **taught** how to answer a question like this in a logical manner. A vast number of candidates are either taught or assume that this is an 'apartheid poem' – this is incorrect as it is in fact related to Angola's liberation struggle.

QUESTION 4: POETRY CONTEXTUAL QUESTION – "THIS WINTER COMING"

QUESTION 1
General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
Candidates struggled with this question. It seems as if they are unable to evaluate the questions of the different poems during the reading time when writing the paper. Do they just choose the poems they think they know best? Perhaps it would be a worth-while exercise to let them practise evaluating the questions of two poems in class to determine which one has the more accessible questions – then they might score better in the poetry section of a paper. Figures of Speech are still a challenge to some learners, although it is encouraging to see that there is a definite improvement in this area. Some candidates still confuse Parts of Speech and Figures of Speech.

QUESTION 2
Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.
Most candidates simply did not understand the poem and interpreted every question literally. Candidates who knew that there is a link to Apartheid, generalised their answers and failed to answer the question in context.

In 4.1, which is an entry level question, candidates did not know the meaning of the word 'shroud' in context. Many simply gave the literal meaning and failed to answer the question: what does 'shroud' reveal about 'the sky'? (Candidates who mentioned the political context of the poem were credited.) Some wild definitions of a 'shroud': it is a sea shell found in the sea or it is a very big rain cloud.

In 4.2 most learners responded that the repetition of 'Who is not frightened?' is an anaphora, which failed to answer the question. The question requires them to '[a]ccount for' the repetition of 'Who is not frightened?'. 'Account for' requires the candidates to give the reason behind the repetition (see Addendum B).

4.3.1 – it is heartening to see that there is a marked improvement in the way candidates are able to identify figures of speech. But Parts of Speech still pop up in answers, especially in weaker candidates.

In 4.3.2 candidates had to discuss the effectiveness of the image. Many candidates merely paraphrased the lines. A discussion on effectiveness should include an explanation of the image and then the implication of the image in context. Please note that 4.3.2 requires them to discuss lines 26 – 27 and not just line 27 as in 4.3.1. It is disturbing that candidates think that the lines mean that the children's naked bodies are used to light fires, or that the children stand too close to the fire and then catch on fire and end up burning to death. Some candidates simply stated that the children are burning because of winter. This clearly shows that candidates do not understand the poem at all.

In 4.4 the question is phrased differently from what has become the expected norm. However, TONE and MESSAGE are closely connected, so learners should still have been able to score marks here. Many learners failed to select appropriate examples of diction to motivate their choice of tone. When a critical discussion is required, the candidate has to consider all the information and draw a conclusion which is linked to the text/lines referred to in the question. Merely paraphrasing the lines is not acceptable. Candidates often miss the second or third mark in these scaffolded questions. Merely quoting examples of diction in an attempt to identify tone cannot be credited, as the examples given should be linked to the critical discussion.

QUESTION 3

Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning.

Learners need to understand each poem. The theme/message is central to understanding imagery/diction in the poem, as the poet has chosen each word and image deliberately to convey his message. (See Addendum A)

Learners should be taught how to interpret question words (consult Addendum B).

QUESTION 4

Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.

A creative response might be helpful if learners struggle to grasp the meaning of a poem. Unfortunately, that will definitely take more time in an already packed syllabus. It is a pity that candidates have the weakest result in this paper which takes 90% of the year to teach.

QUESTION 5: UNSEEN POETRY CONTEXTUAL QUESTION – "THE TREES"

QUESTION 1
General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
This unseen poem seems to have been the most accessible one in quite some time. Some learners still struggled, because of a lack of vocabulary. The reference to 'buds' was often misinterpreted as being either 'birds' or 'bugs', which led to very creative responses to the questions.
QUESTION 2
Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.
Vocabulary still poses a challenge to many learners. If learners thought that 'buds' were 'birds' or 'bugs' the answers to 5.1 were very creative and unlikely. The buds cannot fly. A few candidates responded that 'before theirs (sic) a butterfly, there's a bud which transitions from a butterfly after two days of rest'. Some candidates interpreted 'relax' as only being a human action, which logically led to an answer like 'the old people sit and relax while their young children do everything'.   In 5.2 candidates found it challenging to identify the attitude of the speaker towards the trees. Candidates should be taught that a 2-mark question requires at least two points to the answer. The answer should, once again, be motivated from the context of the poem. Teachers should strongly discourage candidates from using words like 'negative' and 'positive' to identify tone.   In 5.3.1 it is encouraging to see that more candidates manage to identify the figure of speech. However, many candidates still supply a part of speech instead of a figure of speech. "Anomathorphorer" is not an accepted as a figure of speech yet.   5.3.2 seems to have been extremely challenging. Once again, the problem might lie in the limited vocabulary of candidates. They did not know what 'thresh' means, which impacted the discussion of the image. One response posed that the image is 'that of the leafs [sic] vigorously shaking which is compared to a toddler who throws tantrums'. A discussion on effectiveness should include an explanation of the image and then link this to the implication of the image in context. Please note that the discussion in 5.3.2 should refer to lines 9 – 10, whereas identification of the figure of speech in 5.3.1 refers to only line 9.   5.4 has really been made more accessible by splitting the 3 marks into two questions. Learners should be taught to use stronger adjectives to identify tone. 'Happy' and 'sad' are just too generic. In 5.4.2 candidates should be taught that merely saying that the repetition 'emphasises' is not enough. This is not a language paper, and the response should not be technical, but rather interpretative. Unfortunately, the opinion that the repetition of 'afresh' creating a 'whoosh' tree sound could not be credited.
QUESTION 3
Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning.
Candidates should be given more opportunities to practise analysing the unseen poem. This is very challenging, as time constraints are a reality. However, if teachers start to give their learners more opportunities from the lower grades, the marks for the unseen poem would undoubtedly improve towards the end of grade 12.   Practising identifying tone, mood and attitude would also be extremely beneficial – not just for Section A, but also for Sections B and C.   Ultimately, the only way that the performance in the unseen poem can be improved is by exposing candidates to a variety of unseen poems.
QUESTION 4
Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.
See Addendum C

SECTION B: NOVEL

QUESTION 6: "DORIAN GRAY" ESSAY QUESTION

QUESTION 1
General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
In general, the question was poorly answered. The drama essay questions in this paper are more accessible, and yet learners persist in answering the novel essay which is sometimes more challenging. Learners should be discouraged from deciding beforehand which novel and which drama questions they will answer. They should be taught to quickly analyse the two essays (one novel and one drama) on the setworks they offer, and only then decide which is the more accessible option. Candidates should not misspell the names of characters. Sibly Vain is most definitely NOT Sibyl Vane.
QUESTION 2
Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.
The topic was easy to misinterpret. Candidates failed to engage with/argue the topic. This was not an unfairly difficult question, but learners persisted in discussing the influence of Lord Henry and Basil, instead of discussing whether Dorian Gray is too morally weak to stop his nature from changing. Many candidates merely retell the story. Even a simple retelling of the story seems to have been challenging as learners do not know the plot of the novel. Many creative elements crept into their answers. Philosophical essays were also common. Candidates also rely on rote learning of prior essay topics.
QUESTION 3
Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning.
It is imperative that learners be taught literary essay writing skills. Just repeating the topic as an introduction does not produce a good introduction. A thesis should be developed for the introduction and conclusion. (It is best to write the introduction and conclusion after the body of the essay has been written – only then will the candidate know what his/her arguments are. PLANNING AND WRITING AT LEAST A BULLET-POINT ROUGH DRAFT IS IMPERATIVE IF CANDIDATES WANT TO SCORE GOOD MARKS.)
A good thesis statement to use as an introduction might be: *In The Picture of Dorian Gray, Dorian's downfall reveals that his moral weakness prevents him from resisting temptation. As his obsession with pleasure deepens, he willingly sacrifices his conscience, allowing corruption to take control of both his character(nature) and his fate.*
A good conclusion might be: *Ultimately, Dorian Gray's tragic end illustrates how moral weakness leaves a person vulnerable to corruption. Though he initially understands the difference between right and wrong, Dorian continually chooses self-indulgence and beauty over responsibility and integrity. His inability to confront his own flaws allows evil influences to dominate his life, proving that he is too morally weak to stop himself from transforming into something he could not undo.*
Using paragraphs is a basic skill that candidates have been taught since primary school. However, many still struggle to create a topic sentence for each paragraph. There are several methods which can be utilised to teach candidates to write good literary essays. One method is the PEEL-method: **P**oint, **E**xplain, **E**xample, **L**ink. This helps candidates to focus their thoughts and keep track of their argument. However, this is not the only method that could be utilised. But it is imperative that candidates be taught the skills to write a good literary essay.

QUESTION 4
Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.

Here is an example of an essay that scored full marks.

In <u>The Picture of Dorian Gray</u> by Oscar Wilde, morality and change of character is deeply explored through Dorian. His lack of moral strength is proven by his lack of <u>discernement</u>, his lack of discipline and self-preservation and his lack of empathy and regard for others' lives, all evidence of how easily changed he is.

Well-developed thesis; excellent introduction

Spelling mistake – essay does not have to be flawless – see rubric.

Dorian's moral weakness makes him prone to lack of discernement, therefore making him easily influenced and corrupted. From the beginning of the novel, Dorian becomes enthralled with Lord Henry Wotton and his dangerous teachings about Hedonism and Aestheticism. Dorian becomes obsessed with the concept of living of a life devoted to pursuing pleasure, youth and beauty without worrying about the consequences or guilt. Dorian choses vanity and power, wishing for the portrait to bear the marks of sin and age rather than himself. Dorian's total lack of discernment is evident as he has no concept of the evil influence of Hedonism and Lord Henry. Furthermore, Dorian accepts the yellow book from Lord Henry as a gift. It, coupled with Lord Henry's dangerous philosophies, serves as the ultimate guideline to Hedonism, allowing Dorian's character to easily be shaped while he has no moral capacity to shield him from its corrupting ability. Dorian's total lack of moral grounding allowed his character to be swayed in the direction of where he would gain the most pleasure and he has no moral shield to stop this corrupting path.

Moral weakness

Explains nature – cannot stop change

Explains nature – cannot stop change

Explains nature

Example

Nature

Nature

Too morally weak to stop his nature from changing

Links to topic

Moral weakness

Dorian's utter lack of moral strength is portrayed in his lust for pleasure, power and beauty, revealing a lack of discipline. Dorian becomes obsessed with collecting art and indulging sensual pleasures. He falls into the evil grip of opium dens and debauchery. Despite having moments of realisation that his soul and reputation is being ruined, he is too addicted to the pursuit of pleasure and

Example

Nature – inevitable change

Moral weakness

Hedonism, lacking the moral strength to return to the man he once was. As Dorian destroys his mind and body, his lack of discipline and self-preservation evidently stems from a lack of morals. He is now debauched and spiritually decayed, holding no power over his nature, life, mind and body, further demonstrating how morally weak he is.

Too morally weak to stop his nature from changing

Too morally weak to stop his nature from changing

Examples, link back to topic

Dorian's evident lack of empathy, remorse and regard for human life stems from his moral weakness. Dorian cruelly rejects Sibyl Vane, afterwards wanting to make things right, not because he has empathy or remorse in his heart, but because he selfishly doesn't want his portrait to degrade. Dorian ruins the reputations of Adrian Singleton and many others and shows no regret or sorrow. Dorian murders Basil Hallward and blackmails Alan Campbell into disposing of the body, causing him misery and fear. Dorian's lack of morals makes it easy for him to quickly escalate his violence, showing no remorse or empathy for those he has hurt and killed. Dorian's exponentially worsening character and treachery prove that he has no moral grounding to pull him back to goodness, humanity and repent. This ultimately proves that he has no moral strength to prevent his worsening nature.

Morally weak – nature

Example

Nature

Examples

Moral weakness – cannot stop his nature from changing

Changing nature

Links to topic

moral weakness

Throughout the novel, it is made clear the importance of moral grounding. Dorian's lack thereof allows him to be swayed by negative influences, travel down a path of destroying his body and mind, and ultimately becoming inhumane. He proves to have no moral defenses and cannot prevent the corruption of his nature.

Excellent conclusion – well-developed thesis linking back to introduction.

- *Outstanding response; range of striking arguments extensively supported from text; excellent understanding of genre and text*
- *Coherent structure; excellent introduction and conclusion; arguments well structured and clearly developed; language, tone and style mature, impressive, correct*
Content mark: 15
Structure and language mark: 10

It is clear that this essay is very impressive. Planning and writing a well-structured argument this cohesively and comprehensively is deserving of full marks. An essay does not have to be without any spelling or grammatical errors to score full marks.

In the novel "The Picture of Dorian Gray" by Oscar Wilde, Dorian is easily influenced by others which results in his nature changing drastically.

Generic introduction – merely repeating the topic.

In the beginning Dorian is not obsessed with himself and does not seem to have an ego. Dorian has his own morals and his own way of thinking however he does not stick to his morals. Lord Henry introduces Dorian to Hedonism and what a hedonistic lifestyle is like and this information along with Lord Henry's ideas do not align with Dorians morals, however Dorian chooses to listen and entertain these ideas and this is a sign that Dorian is morally weak.

Promising topic sentence

Too vague; be specific

Punctuation error – do not penalise for every grammar mistake – global impression

Relevance? Explain? Example?

Dorian is given the Yellow book from Lord Henry and this book contains information and ideas that can completely change the nature of a person. Dorian is fascinated by the Yellow book and the more he reads it, the more his personality and outlook on life changes. Dorian learns that he can use his good looks to his advantage and he becomes obsessed with himself.

Too vague; be more specific

Portrait?

Dorian's whole nature changes because he is so easily influenced by others. Dorian becomes a totally different person compared to who he was before he met Lord Henry, he becomes the exact opposite of who he was. All his views change and his perception of himself changes because he is morally weak. If Dorian was morally strong then he would not change the way he acts and his nature wouldn't change, but it does change.

Relevance? This is not an "influence" essay.

Vague – no explanation, no examples

Speculation – change to a statement.

Dorian's actions and behaviour towards others is because of Lord Henry's influence, his morals change because he allows them to. Dorian did not have a strong set of morals because at the end he is a completely different person. Dorian's nature changes so fast that he doesn't even realise how different he is until it's to late.

Not an "influence" essay

Ineffective conclusion – merely repeating the topic at te end of each paragraph (trying to link) but no relevant arguments substantiated by in-depth analysis.

QUESTION 7: "DORIAN GRAY" CONTEXTUAL QUESTION

QUESTION 1
General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
The performance in this question is as expected: stronger candidates performed well while weaker candidates did not.
QUESTION 2
Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.
In 7.1 candidates should be taught that a place-in-context question requires them to refer to events directly prior to the extract. Nothing that happens in the extract or after the extract can be credited.   7.2 is still an entry-level question and requires knowledge of the plot.   7.3 is also an entry-level question. It requires learners to understand the denotation and connotation of "lad". Vocabulary once again proved to be a challenge as some learners interpreted "lad" to be a "leader".   In 7.4 many candidates struggled to score 3 marks. In a 3-mark irony question candidates should address both parts of the irony and discuss the implications. E.g. Basil believes Dorian to be pure (✓) and he fears that a person from the lower class will cause a stain on Dorian's reputation and character. (✓) However, it is Dorian who proves to be the 'vile creature' who destroys Sibyl. (✓)   In 7.5 candidates struggled to say what this extract revealed about Basil's character. They also did not limit themselves to only this extract, although the question instructed them to do so.   7.6 is once again a place-in-context question. Candidates must limit themselves to events that happen directly prior to the extract. Because candidates do not know their texts, they struggle to answer this question.   In 7.7 the majority of candidates struggled to interpret and explain 'a beautiful caged thing'.   In 7.8 the majority of candidates failed to score 3 marks. They seem to lack the vocabulary to formulate an answer. Once again, teachers need to give candidates practice in how to answer the higher-order questions.   In 7.9 candidates did not know anything about Alan Campbell's character, except that he helped Dorian get rid of Basil's body. They were unable to formulate a change in Alan, because they did not understand/know his role in the overall plot of the novel.   7.10 was poorly answered. Candidates tend to have too many speculative answers. Those cannot be credited, because we can only deal with evidence-based answers. E.g. "If Dorian Gray did not allow Lord Henry to influence him, he would not have gone down the path of moral degeneration" or "If Dorian did not break up with Sibyl Vane, she would not have died." Those arguments cannot be motivated from the novel. It is far more accurate to say, "Dorian Gray allows Lord Henry to influence him, which leads to his path of moral degeneration" or "Dorian breaks up with Sibyl Vane, which leads to her suicide". When a critical discussion is required, candidates have to give an interpretation of a character's personality/motivation/actions. Merely making a statement and not motivating that by supplying examples or a critical comment leads to an unsuccessful response.
QUESTION 3
Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning.
- Interpretation of imagery needs more attention.   "COMMENT" and "CRITICALLY DISCUSS" need to be better understood. (See Addendum B).   *Attitude*, *mood* and *tone* should once again receive more teaching time. During the reading/discussion of the novel in class, it might be helpful to ask learners to identify the attitude of characters in an extract, to identify the mood or tone in an extract AND TO MOTIVATE THEIR ANSWERS. This will be a start to teaching them how to "comment" or "critically discuss". General answers cannot score good marks. Learners need to be specific, referring to the extract in context (unless instructed to "refer to the novel as a whole").   - Teachers should focus on all the characters and their impact on the plot.

- Candidates should be discouraged from speculation. Giving a succinct answer to a question cannot involve any 'story telling'. Candidates should be encouraged to provide evidence once they have made a point.
- Candidates struggle to 'decode' the questions. Perhaps an explanation of the taxonomy of the paper would be to their benefit. If they can roughly guess what the level of the question is, and they know the question words (Addendum B), they would undoubtedly improve their marks significantly.
- Candidates should be taught to PEEL even the contextual questions (see Question 3 of the discussion on Question 6).
- See Addendum C.

QUESTION 4

Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.

The most important focus point should be that candidates have to know the novel: characters, plot, themes, symbols and motifs. This should be the starting point for any success in this paper. If candidates do not know the novel, all the teaching on 'comment' and 'critically discuss' and question words and PEEL is to no avail. This is a challenge that all teachers experience. Creative ways should be found to teach the novel – and NOT the movie – so that marks can improve.

QUESTION 8: "LIFE OF PI" ESSAY QUESTION

QUESTION 1

General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?

It is encouraging to see that some centres have clearly prepared their learners well for the novel essay. Learners who knew the plot, themes, characters and symbolism of the novel have scored well. There were, however, many candidates who have not come to terms with the nuances and requirements of this type of question and this has resulted in poor performance. The question is fair and accessible if learners have been taught the skills required.
Candidates should not misspell the names of characters. Candidates should also not confuse Richard Parker and Mahisha.

QUESTION 2

Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.

Many candidates failed to interpret the topic correctly. Candidates also failed to engage with/argue the topic. This was not an unfairly difficult question, but candidates failed to discuss how Pi's unusual approach to life becomes his greatest strength. Many candidates merely retell the story. Even a simple retelling of the story seems to have been challenging as learners do not know the plot of the novel. Many creative elements crept into their answers. Philosophical essays were also common. Candidates also rely on rote learning of prior essay topics. Many learners still do not have the necessary skills to develop an argument effectively. Lack of vocabulary also plays a significant role in how they structure an argument.
Copying the two extracts from question 9 will clearly score no marks. Creative responses will also not be credited: "He saw the tinger at night and he was too scared to see it. The tinger came straigh [sic] to him. He didn't run is that he was shocked, the tinger introduced him self on front of Pi. He was still shocked and scared at the same. The tinger said, 'I am Richard Parker small boy who are you?' Pi had no chance he responded slowly with his voice." This is clearly a creative response with no argument linking it to the topic and it had to score 0 for Content and 0 for Structure and Language.

QUESTION 3

Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning.

It is imperative that learners be taught literary essay writing skills.

Just repeating the topic as an introduction does not produce a good introduction. A thesis should be developed for the introduction and conclusion. (It is best to write the introduction and conclusion after the body of the essay has been written – only then will the candidate know what his/her arguments are. PLANNING AND WRITING AT LEAST A BULLET-POINT ROUGH DRAFT IS IMPERATIVE IF CANDIDATES WANT TO SCORE GOOD MARKS.)

A good thesis statement to use as an introduction might be:
In Life of Pi, Pi Patel's unconventional view of the world – shaped by his deep curiosity, blend of spiritual beliefs and imaginative resilience – becomes the very quality that allows him to survive the unimaginable. His openness to faith, his willingness to embrace multiple perspectives and his creative problem-solving transform suffering into hope during his ordeal at sea.

A good conclusion might be:
Ultimately, Pi's unusual approach to life becomes the foundation of his survival and his greatest source of strength. By embracing faith, imagination and adaptability, he is able to endure profound isolation and overwhelming fear, transforming a desperate fight for survival into a story of spiritual and emotional triumph.

Using paragraphs is a basic skill that candidates have been taught since primary school. However, many still struggle to create a topic sentence for each paragraph. There are several methods which can be utilised to teach candidates to write good literary essays. One method is the PEEL-method: **P**oint, **E**xplain, **E**xample, **L**ink. This helps candidates to focus their thoughts and keep track of their argument. However, this is not the only method that could be utilised. But it is imperative that candidates be taught the skills to write a good literary essay.

QUESTION 4

Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.

This is an example of an essay that scored full marks.

In the novel, "Life of Pi", Pi's unusual approach to life ends up being the greatest strength in his life. Pi's extensive knowledge of the wild, religious practices and ability to adapt, played a great role in allowing him to overcome his ordeal.	*Well-developed thesis statement* *Tense error – do not penalise every mistake; evaluate globally*
Pi's life has been greatly centred around science or zoology. Pi grew up in a zoo and had extensive knowledge of the wild animals and behaviour. Mr Santosh Patel, Pi's father, had taught him about how animals follow certain routines and social hierarchy. This became his greatest strength as Pi had the knowledge on training Richard Parker. He established an alpha omega relationship. This established his dominance and allowed him to co-exist with a tiger. As Pi established his territorial dominance by blowing a whistle, shouting or stomping, it was clear that Parker had viewed Pi as the Alpha male as he hid his faeces – sign of submission. Pi was also taught at the zoo that if you provide the basic necessities to animals, they wil not try to	*topic sentence (point)* *explanation* *example (discussion)* *explanation* *example (discussion)* *example (discussion)* *example (discussion)* *explanation*

escape. Similarly, Pi started viewing Richard Parker as a companion rather than an enemy. This was inspired by the prusten sounds that Parker made implying his intentions are harmless. Pi started providing food, water and shelter to Richard that ensured that he could not escape. Pi had received all the knowledge from his time at the Pondicherry Zoo. His love for Zoology ultimately became his greatest strength, allowing him to overcome the ordeal.

example

example

Links to topic

Another key component in Pi's life is his love for God. Pi practices three religions namely Hinduism, Christianity and Islam. Pi's parents are secular but Pi was religious. He says that we are introduced to religion and not born. Religion ultimately turned out to become his greatest strength. Being stuck at sea for 227 days ultimately causes one to lose hope. However, Pi would pray every single day. Praying gave him a sense of comfort and hope. Faith was an unwavering aspect that lasted with Pi till the very end. Religion gave Pi determination to fight. It provided Pi with emotional and physical resilience that eventually became his greatest strength in his ordeal. Many considered his religious practices 'unusual' and placed boundaries on him that forced him to choose one religion. When the three religious leaders met, they bickered about which religion was better. Pi offered that people who defend God from the outside with violence are misunderstanding religion and are narrow-minded. He says that "I just want to love God" suggesting that however unusual it is to practice three religions, all he wants is to love God through various religions. Religion also served as the "better story" as faith brought his reality to life through imagination. Pi created the better story to be able to deal with all the gruesome crimes he had committed. Religion allowed him to survive and endure a palatable version of the ordeal. Without religion and the "better story" he would not have been

Topic sentence

Explanation (discussion)

Explanation (discussion)

Example

Explanation (discussion)

Explanation (discussion)

topic

Example

Discussion

Clumsy phrasing

Explanation (discussion)

Verges on speculation (dangerous ground)

determined to survive. Therefore, faith gave him purpose to live and became his greatest strength in surviving.

Links to topic

Lastly, his ability to adapt in vast situations became his greatest strength. It started when people at school used to bully Pi for his name sounding like "Pissing". He came up with the strategy to give himself the nickname "Pi". This shows his ability to develop strategic plans to adapt to a situation. His adaptability soon became a strength for him at sea as he was faced with a multitude of challenges. He had to make a raft to create a boundary between himself and Richard Parker. This shows how he can be resourceful and practical to adapt. Additionally, he adapted to giving up his vegetarianism. This ties in with the idea of a "measure of madness" as he was forced to inexplicable things in an attempt to survive. However, it was his ability to adapt that became his strength at sea. Therefore, his ability to adapt was an advantage in his ordeal.

Topic sentence

Develops argument

Grounds argument in topic

Examples to support argument

Argument linked to topic – could be better phrased, but the link has been made.

To conclude, in "Life of Pi", Pi faces various events that challenged him greatly. However, his unusual approaches to life evident in his interest in zoology, religion and ability to adapt became his biggest strength in overcoming his struggles.

Good conclusion – does not merely repeat the topic, but fleshes it out.

It is clear that this essay is very impressive. Planning and writing a well-structured argument this cohesively and comprehensively is deserving of full marks. An essay does not have to be without any spelling or grammatical errors to score full marks.

- *Outstanding response; in-depth interpretation of topic with a range of striking arguments supported from text; excellent understanding of genre and text.*
- *Coherent structure; excellent introduction; arguments well-structured and clearly developed; language, tone and style mature, impressive and correct.*

Content mark: 15
Structure and Language mark: 10

QUESTION 9: "LIFE OF PI" CONTEXTUAL QUESTION

QUESTION 1
General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
Most candidates are still struggling with higher order questions. It is heartening to see that many candidates know the plot and characters better, but they still struggle to translate their knowledge into a deeper discussion which shows insight. It seems as if they have trouble interpreting the questions. Candidates tend to do better in the essay question, because of this difficulty in interpreting questions.
QUESTION 2
Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.
In 9.1 candidates simply have to put the extract in context and give a reason for the 'silence'. This is a place-in-context question, and the memo treats it as such.
9.2 is still an entry-level question and requires knowledge of the plot. Candidates who did not know the plot thought that Pi was named after a choir, or that Pi's birth name was Pi which he then changed to Piscine.
9.3 is a middle-order question which requires candidates to understand the relationship between Pi and Ravi. Many candidates failed to understand that that they had a normal sibling relationship which includes good-natured teasing from the elder brother. Many candidates merely stated that Ravi "mocked" Pi. This word is used in the extract and was thus not credited.
In 9.4 many candidates struggled to score 3 marks. In a 3-mark question candidates should include a discussion after identifying the character trait(s) Pi displays in this line.
In 9.5 candidates failed to discuss how repetition plays a significant role in Pi's life on the lifeboat. They know what he repeats, but this is a 'discussion' question, which requires candidates to add an interpretation/give a reason for the first part of their answer.
9.6 is once again a place-in-context question. Candidates must limit themselves to events that happen directly prior to the extract. Because many candidates do not know their texts sufficiently, they struggle to answer this question.
In 9.7 candidates had to explain the irony. In a 2-mark irony question candidates should address both parts of the irony.
In 9.8 the majority of candidates failed to score 3 marks. They did not interpret the question correctly and failed to mention their own response towards Pi and then offer a discussion worth 2 marks after the identification of their own attitude. This could be a vocabulary problem. Candidates also have to limit themselves to 'this point in the novel'.
In 9.9 many candidates understood how Richard Parker is a symbol of survival. However, most failed to score the third mark as they failed to discuss the symbolism. Merely explaining that Richard Parker gives him purpose and ensures that he stays alive, is not enough.
9.10 was poorly answered. Candidates mentioned that Pi believes in three religions and that he knows about animals. However, this is a higher-order question and should be treated as such. The question also allows learners to discuss examples from the novel as a whole. It is problematic that candidates tend to have too many speculative answers. Those cannot be credited, because only evidence-based answers can be credited. E.g. "If Pi did not believe in God, he would not have survived." Although that may be true, the reader does not <u>know</u> that he would have died. It would be better to make it a statement and then prove the statement from the novel. Candidates should also make sure that they discuss faith AND Pi's scientific mind, as the question clearly stated.
QUESTION 3
Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning.
• Interpretation of imagery needs more attention. • "COMMENT" and "CRITICALLY DISCUSS" need to be better understood. (See Addendum B). • *Attitude*, *mood* and *tone* should once again receive more teaching time. During the reading/discussion of the novel in class, it might be helpful to ask learners to identify the attitude of characters in an extract,

to identify the mood or tone in an extract AND TO MOTIVATE THEIR ANSWERS. This will be a start to teaching them how to "comment" or "critically discuss". General answers cannot score good marks. Learners need to be specific, referring to the extract in context (unless instructed to "refer to the novel as a whole").

- Teachers should focus on all the characters and their impact on the plot.
- Candidates should be discouraged from speculation.
- Giving a succinct answer to a question cannot involve any 'story telling'. Candidates should be encouraged to provide evidence once they have made a point.
- Candidates struggle to 'decode' the questions. Perhaps an explanation of the taxonomy of the paper would be to their benefit. If they can roughly guess what the level of the question is, and they know the question words (Addendum B), they would undoubtedly improve their marks significantly.
- Candidates should be taught to PEEL even the contextual questions (see Question 3 of the discussion on Question 8).
- See Addendum C.

QUESTION 4
Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.
The most important focus point should be that candidates have to know the novel: characters, plot, themes, symbols and motifs. This should be the starting point for any success in this paper. If candidates do not know the novel, all the teaching on 'comment' and 'critically discuss' and question words and PEEL is to no avail. This is a challenge that all teachers experience. Creative ways should be found to teach the novel – and NOT the movie – so that marks can improve. Ensure that candidates do not mix up the 'real' and 'better' story.

SECTION C: DRAMA

QUESTION 10: "HAMLET" ESSAY QUESTION

QUESTION 1
General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
This essay question is very accessible. The instruction to discuss a minimum of three characters definitely assists candidates in writing their essays. However, some candidates ignored this clear instruction.   It is encouraging to see that candidates wrote fewer narrative essays which ignored the topic. Nevertheless, many candidates still struggled to produce good essays. Developing relevant arguments that address the topic and structuring essays logically, still seem to be a challenge.   Candidates who had not read the drama produced some wildly creative answers.   Vocabulary is still a challenge. Misspelling the characters' names is always frowned upon. Words like "poison" and "arras" (NOT curtain!) are central to the drama and should be spelled correctly.
QUESTION 2
Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.
Many candidates still employ a flawed style.   - Literary essays should be written in the present tense.   - Contractions should not be used.   - Incorrect register is often used – this is a formal assessment and "chatty" language and using personal pronouns (we/I) should be avoided.   - Essays should not be moralising. Arguments should be objective and only address the topic – "we" should not be taught anything from the drama for the purposes of this essay.   - The technical use of quotations must be observed. Quotations function as support to the point being made, not the point itself, so introducing the quote and stating why it is being used ought to be included.
QUESTION 3
Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning.
Teachers should encourage a holistic learning of the play/themes/characterisation and abstain from drilling candidates on specific (predicted) topics. Some learners write off-topic and attempt to force pre-learnt answers/memos to fit the topic of the paper. That practice never leads to a successful essay. Many candidates struggle to analyse the topic correctly, which leads to weak essays. It is also clear that some candidates do not know the plot of the drama and produced creative essays. Some candidates also bring characters from their novel into the drama: Dorian was the king and Henry was Hamlet's father.   If quotations from the play are used, they should be relevant to the argument.   A good introduction and conclusion need to contain a well-developed thesis and not merely a repetition of the topic in the question.   An introduction containing a thesis statement could be: In _Hamlet, Shakespeare demonstrates how deception and disguise become powerful tools for characters such as Hamlet, Claudius and Polonius to manipulate appearances, conceal the truth and pursue their ambitions – ultimately revealing the destructive consequences of deceit in a corrupt court._   A conclusion could be: _Shakespeare uses the theme of deception and disguise in _Hamlet_ to expose the moral decay lurking beneath the polished surface of the Danish court. Through the actions Hamlet, Claudius and Polonius, it becomes evident that lies and hidden motives may offer temporary advantages, but they also unleash distrust, confusion and tragedy._

QUESTION 4
Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.
The most important focus point should be that candidates have to know the drama: characters, plot, themes, symbols and motifs. This should be the starting point for any success in this paper. If candidates do not know the plot, all the teaching on 'comment' and 'critically discuss' and question words and PEEL is to no avail. This is a challenge that all teachers experience. Creative ways should be found to teach the drama – and NOT the movie – so that marks can improve. Only reading summaries of the plot online or in study guides will not suffice.

QUESTION 11: "HAMLET" CONTEXTUAL QUESTION

QUESTION 1
General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
The contextual question was problematic to many learners. Candidates who knew the play managed to score 2 marks for the lower-order questions. It is encouraging that some learners have definitely improved in the director-question. Answers requiring a "comment" or a "critical discussion" were less successful.
QUESTION 2
Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.
11.1 is a place-in-context question. Candidates should be taught that this type of question requires them to refer to events directly prior to the extract. This is an entry-level question that should be 2 easy marks. However, candidates who did not read the play or who do not know the play are unable to score these marks.
11.2 is still an entry-level question which requires candidates to know the plot. Candidates who did not know the plot obviously had some interesting answers. King Hamlet was referred to as Lord Senior Hamlet. The king was also called Bernardo and even Guildenstern.
11.3 is a 2-mark irony question. Candidates must explain (not give the definition) both sides of the irony in context to be credited 2 marks.
11.4 was problematic to candidates. Just making a vague statement cannot be credited. Candidates need a well-developed discussion to score 3 marks.
In 11.5 some candidates gave biographical details about Horatio, rather than discussing what the lines reveal about his character. Candidates are also guided by the question: "at this point in the play". The rest of the play cannot be used to motivate the candidates' answers.
11.6 is the entry-level question after the extract, as usual. Candidates should be taught to refer to events directly prior to the extract. The context is most definitely not Act 3, Scene 2.
11.7 is an "[a]ccount for" question. Refer to Addendum B to teach candidates how to respond to this question correctly.
11.8 requires the candidates to comment on what those specific lines reveal about Hamlet's attitude towards Gertude – NOT the candidates' attitude. This question requires a cogent comment that motivates Hamlet's attitude. Ending the answer with "So this just makes me mad" cannot be credited.
11.9 is the usual director question. Candidates need to identify the character's tone, suggest body language and motivate the choice of tone and body language. A facial expression cannot be credited as it is unlikely that a facial expression will be visible to the whole auditorium during a performance. Candidates who do not know the plot will not be able to score marks, as this question is very closely linked to the context at this particular point in the play. "The actor should rise their voice, slam something and when giving the lines think of someone overtaking and stealing your parking spot" cannot be credited.
11.10 is the higher order question that requires candidates to discuss a statement "critically". (See Addendum B.) When a critical discussion is required, candidates have to give an interpretation of a

character's personality/motivation/actions. Merely making a statement and not motivating that by supplying examples or a critical comment leads to an unsuccessful response.

QUESTION 3

Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning.

Many candidates still employ a flawed style.
- Contractions should not be used.
- Incorrect register is often used – this is a formal assessment and "chatty" language and using personal pronouns (we/I) should be avoided.

Teachers should encourage a holistic learning of the play/themes/characterisation and abstain from drilling candidates on specific (predicted) topics. Some learners write off-topic and attempt to force pre-learnt answers/memos to fit the question. Many candidates struggle to interpret questions correctly, which leads to irrelevant responses. It is also clear that some candidates do not know the plot of the drama and produced creative essays. Some characters also bring characters from their novel into the drama: Dorian was the king and Henry was Hamlet's father.

If quotations from the play is used, they should be relevant to the argument.

QUESTION 4

Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.

- Interpretation of imagery needs more attention.
- "COMMENT" and "CRITICALLY DISCUSS" need to be better understood. (See Addendum B).
- *Attitude*, *mood* and *tone* should once again receive more teaching time. During the reading/discussion of the novel in class, it might be helpful to ask learners to identify the attitude of characters in an extract, to identify the mood or tone in an extract AND TO MOTIVATE THEIR ANSWERS. This will be a start to teaching them how to "comment" or "critically discuss". General answers cannot score good marks. Learners need to be specific, referring to the extract in context (unless instructed to "refer to the novel as a whole").
- Teachers should focus on all the characters and their impact on the plot.
- Candidates should be discouraged from speculation.
- Giving a succinct answer to a question cannot involve any 'story telling'. Candidates should be encouraged to provide evidence once they have made a point.
- Candidates struggle to 'decode' the questions. Perhaps an explanation of the taxonomy of the paper would be to their benefit. If they can roughly guess what the level of the question is, and they know the question words (Addendum B), they would undoubtedly improve their marks significantly.
- Candidates should be taught to PEEL even the contextual questions (see Question 3 of the discussion on Question 8).
- See Addendum C.

QUESTION 12: "OTHELLO" ESSAY QUESTION

QUESTION 1

General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?

This essay question is very accessible. The instruction to discuss a minimum of two characters definitely assists candidates in writing their essays. However, some candidates ignored this clear instruction. It is encouraging to see that candidates wrote fewer narrative essays which ignored the topic. Nevertheless, many candidates still struggled to produce good essays. Developing relevant arguments that address the topic and structuring essays logically still seem to be a challenge.

Vocabulary is still a challenge. Misspelling the characters' names is always frowned upon. Words like "Cyprus" and "handkerchief" (NOT harengetchefe!) are central to the drama and should be spelled correctly.

Candidates who had not read the drama produced some wildly creative answers: Cassio instructed Iago to tell Roderigo to kill Cassio.

QUESTION 2

Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.

Many candidates still employ a flawed style.
- Literary essays should be written in the present tense.
- Contractions should not be used.
- Incorrect register is often used – this is a formal assessment and "chatty" language and using personal pronouns (we/I) should be avoided.
- Essays should not be moralising. Arguments should be objective and only address the topic – "we" should not be taught anything from the drama for the purposes of this essay.
- The technical use of quotations must be observed. Quotations function as support to the point being made, not the point itself, so introducing the quote and stating why it is being used ought to be included.

QUESTION 3

Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning.

Teachers should encourage a holistic learning of the play/themes/characterisation and abstain from drilling candidates on specific (predicted) topics. Some learners write off-topic and attempt to force pre-learnt answers/memos to fit the topic of the paper. Many candidates struggle to analyse the topic correctly, which leads to weak essays. It is also clear that some candidates do not know the plot or characters of the drama and produced creative essays. Some candidates also were of the opinion that Gratiano came to fetch his daughter or that Iago is most definitely in love with Desdemona and that motivates all his actions. If quotations from the play is used, they should be relevant to the argument.

A good introduction and conclusion need to contain a well-developed thesis and not merely a repetition of the topic in the question.

An introduction containing a thesis statement could be:
In Othello, deception and disguise become powerful forces that manipulate perception, distort truth and drive the tragic downfall of characters. Through Iago's calculated deceit, Othello's misguided trust, and Desdemona's innocent vulnerability, Shakespeare reveals how easily appearances can be constructed and believed, ultimately showing that the pursuit of power and control is often hidden behind masks of loyalty and love.

A conclusion could be:
Ultimately, Shakespeare's Othello exposes the destructive influence of deception and disguise on human relationships and moral judgement. As Iago's lies infiltrate the thoughts of others, trust is shattered, truth becomes obscured and characters who once acted with integrity are driven to betrayal, violence and tragedy.

QUESTION 4

Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.

The most important focus point should be that candidates have to know the drama: characters, plot, themes, symbols and motifs. This should be the starting point for any success in this paper. If candidates do not know the plot, all the teaching on 'comment' and 'critically discuss' and question words and PEEL is to no avail. This is a challenge that all teachers experience. Creative ways should be found to teach the drama

– and NOT the movie – so that marks can improve. Only reading summaries of the plot online or in study guides will not suffice.

QUESTION 13: "OTHELLO" CONTEXTUAL QUESTION

QUESTION 1

General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?

The contextual question was problematic to many learners. Candidates who knew the play managed to score 2 marks for the lower-order questions. It is encouraging that some learners have definitely improved in the director-question. Answers requiring a "comment" or a "critical discussion" were less successful.

QUESTION 2

Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.

13.1 is a place-in-context question. Candidates should be taught that this type of question requires them to refer to events directly prior to the extract. This is an entry-level question that should be 2 easy marks. However, candidates who did not read the play or who do not know the play are unable to score these marks.

13.2 is still an entry-level question which requires candidates to know the plot. Candidates who did not know the plot obviously had some interesting answers.

13.3 is a 2-mark which requires knowledge of the plot.

13.4 is the usual director question. Candidates need to identify the character's tone, suggest body language and motivate the choice of tone and body language. A facial expression cannot be credited as it is unlikely that a facial expression will be visible to the whole auditorium during a performance. Candidates who do not know the plot will not be able to score marks, as this question is very closely linked to the context at this particular point in the play. "The actor should rise their voice, slam something and when giving the lines think of someone overtaking and stealing your parking spot" cannot be credited.

In 13.5 candidates are required to discuss the impression the reader has of Desdemona at this point in the play. This question requires a cogent comment that motivates the reader's impression. Ending the answer with "So this just makes me mad" cannot be credited. some candidates gave biographical details about Desdemona, rather than discussing what the lines reveal about her character. Candidates are also guided by the question: "at this point in the play". The rest of the play cannot be used to motivate the candidates' answers.

13.6 is the entry-level question after the extract, as usual. Candidates should be taught to refer to events directly prior to the extract. The context is most definitely not Act 5, Scene 1.

13.7 is a middle-order question that requires knowledge of the plot. Refer to Addendum B to teach candidates how to respond to this question correctly.

13.8 is a 3-mark irony question. In a 3-mark irony question candidates should address both parts of the irony in context (not give the definition of irony) and discuss the implications. E.g. The irony in Cassio's appeal lies in the fact that he is calling for help after being wounded, but the person he is calling to is Iago, (✓) who is the one responsible for orchestrating this violence. (✓) Cassio's faith in Iago is still intact at this point since he is unaware that Iago has been working against him. (✓)

13.9 is a "comment" question, which requires the candidate to refer to the play as a whole to motivate the response.

13.10 is the higher order question that requires candidates to discuss Iago's character "critically". (See Addendum B.) When a critical discussion is required, candidates have to give an interpretation of a character's personality/motivation/actions. Merely making a statement and not motivating that by supplying examples or a critical comment leads to an unsuccessful response.

QUESTION 3

Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning.

Many candidates still employ a flawed style.
- Contractions should not be used.
- Incorrect register is often used – this is a formal assessment and "chatty" language and using personal pronouns (we/I) should be avoided.

Teachers should encourage a holistic learning of the play/themes/characterisation and abstain from drilling candidates on specific (predicted) topics. Some learners write off-topic and attempt to force pre-learnt answers/memos to fit the question. Many candidates struggle to interpret questions correctly, which leads to irrelevant responses. It is also clear that some candidates do not know the plot of the drama and produced creative essays.

If quotations from the play are used, they should be relevant to the argument.

QUESTION 4

Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.

- Interpretation of imagery needs more attention.
- "COMMENT" and "CRITICALLY DISCUSS" need to be better understood. (See Addendum B).
- *Attitude*, *mood* and *tone* should once again receive more teaching time. During the reading/discussion of the novel in class, it might be helpful to ask learners to identify the attitude of characters in an extract, to identify the mood or tone in an extract AND TO MOTIVATE THEIR ANSWERS. This will be a start to teaching them how to "comment" or "critically discuss". General answers cannot score good marks. Learners need to be specific, referring to the extract in context (unless instructed to "refer to the novel as a whole").
- Teachers should focus on all the characters and their impact on the plot.
- Candidates should be discouraged from speculation.
- Giving a succinct answer to a question cannot involve any 'story telling'. Candidates should be encouraged to provide evidence once they have made a point.
- Candidates struggle to 'decode' the questions. Perhaps an explanation of the taxonomy of the paper would be to their benefit. If they can roughly guess what the level of the question is, and they know the question words (Addendum B), they would undoubtedly improve their marks significantly.
- Candidates should be taught to PEEL even the contextual questions (see Question 3 of the discussion on Question 8).
- See Addendum C.

QUESTION 14: "THE CRUCIBLE" ESSAY QUESTION

QUESTION 1

General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?

This essay question is very accessible. The instruction to discuss a minimum of three characters definitely assist candidates in writing their essays. However, some candidates ignored this clear instruction.

It is encouraging to see that candidates wrote fewer narrative essays which ignored the topic. Nevertheless, many candidates still struggled to produce good essays. Developing relevant arguments that address the topic and structuring essays logically still seem to be a challenge.

Candidates who had not read the drama produced some wildly creative answers.

Vocabulary is still a challenge. Misspelling the characters' names is always frowned upon. Words like "accused", (not "accused"), "witch" (not "which", "wich" or "whitch") and "forest" (NOT bush!) are central to the drama and should be spelled correctly.

QUESTION 2

Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.

Many candidates still employ a flawed style.
- Literary essays should be written in the present tense.
- Contractions should not be used.
- Incorrect register is often used – this is a formal assessment and "chatty" language and using personal pronouns (we/I) should be avoided.

Essays should not be moralising. Arguments should be objective and only address the topic – "we" should not be taught anything from the drama for the purposes of this essay.

QUESTION 3

Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning.

Teachers should encourage a holistic learning of the play/themes/characterisation and abstain from drilling candidates on specific (predicted) topics. Some learners write off-topic and attempt to force pre-learnt answers/memos to fit the topic of the paper. That practice never leads to a successful essay. Many candidates struggle to analyse the topic correctly, which leads to weak essays. It is also clear that some candidates do not know the plot of the drama and produced creative essays. Some candidates also bring characters from their novel into the drama: Dorian was the minster and Henry was Betty's father.
If quotations from the play is used, they should be relevant to the argument.

The good introduction and conclusion need to contain a well-developed thesis and not merely a repetition of the topic in the question.

An introduction containing a thesis statement could be:
In _The Crucible_, Arthur Miller highlights how deception and disguise become tools for manipulation and survival as the villagers of Salem conceal their true motives behind masks of righteousness. Through false accusations, performative piety and hidden resentments, characters exploit fear and hysteria to gain power, protect their reputations or seek revenge._

A conclusion could be:
In the end, _The Crucible_ demonstrates how deception and disguise corrupt the moral foundation of Salem, turning neighbours against one another and allowing injustice to thrive. As characters continue to hide their self-interest behind false displays of virtue, truth becomes lost in a frenzy of suspicion and fear. Miller's portrayal of the tragic outcomes – including damaged reputations, broken relationship, and innocent lives destroyed – underscores the devastating cost of deception in this community._

QUESTION 4

Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.

The most important focus point should be that candidates have to know the drama: characters, plot, themes, symbols and motifs. This should be the starting point for any success in this paper. If candidates do not know the plot, all the teaching on 'comment' and 'critically discuss' and question words and PEEL is to no avail. This is a challenge that all teachers experience. Creative ways should be found to teach the drama – and NOT the movie – so that marks can improve. Only reading summaries of the plot online or in study guides will not suffice.

QUESTION 15: "THE CRUCIBLE" CONTEXTUAL QUESTION

QUESTION 1

General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?

The contextual question was problematic to many learners. Candidates who knew the play managed to score 2 marks for the lower-order questions. It is encouraging that some learners have definitely improved in the director-question. Answers requiring a "comment" or a "critical discussion" were less successful.

QUESTION 2

Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.

15.1 is a place-in-context question. Candidates should be taught that this type of question requires them to refer to events directly prior to the extract. This is an entry-level question that should be 2 easy marks. However, candidates who did not read the play or who do not know the play are unable to score these marks. The context is definitely not Act 1.

15.2 is still an entry-level question which requires candidates to know the plot. Candidates who did not know the plot, obviously had some interesting answers.

15.3 is a 2-mark which requires knowledge of the plot. Candidates have to remember that a 2-mark question requires them to mention two points.

15.4 requires a discussion of the role of dishonesty in the play. Candidates need to have two points that are well discussed. A good discussion should include motivation for/justification of the argument being discussed.

In 15.5 candidates are required to discuss what the stated lines reveal about Abigail's character at this point in the play. Some candidates gave biographical details about Abigail, rather than discussing what the lines reveal about her character. Candidates are also guided by the question: "at this point in the play". The rest of the play cannot be used to motivate the candidates' answers.

15.6 is the entry-level question after the extract, as usual. Candidates should be taught to refer to events directly prior to the extract. Nothing that is in the extract can be credited.

15.7 is a 2-mark irony question. In a 2-mark irony question candidates should address both parts of the irony in context (not give the definition of irony).

15.8 is the higher order question that requires candidates to comment on what the stated lines reveal about Rebecca's character. (See Addendum B.) When a critical discussion is required, candidates have to give an interpretation of a character's personality/motivation/actions. Merely making a statement and not motivating that by supplying examples or a comment leads to an unsuccessful response. Saying that Rebecca Nurse is "a f*****n legend" can, unfortunately, not score any marks.

15.9 is the usual director question. Candidates need to identify the character's tone, suggest body language and motivate the choice of tone and body language. A facial expression cannot be credited as it is unlikely that a facial expression will be visible to the whole auditorium during a performance. Candidates who do not know the plot will not be able to score marks, as this question is very closely linked to the context at this particular point in the play. "The actor should rise their voice, slam something and when giving the lines think of someone overtaking and stealing your parking spot" cannot be credited.

15.10 is the higher order question that requires candidates to "critically discuss" how John's internal conflict influences his actions. (See Addendum B.) When a critical discussion is required, candidates have to give an interpretation of a character's personality/motivation/actions. Merely making a statement and not motivating that by supplying examples or a critical comment leads to an unsuccessful response.

QUESTION 3

Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning.

Many candidates still employ a flawed style.
- Contractions should not be used.

- Incorrect register is often used – this is a formal assessment and "chatty" language and using personal pronouns (we/I) should be avoided.

Teachers should encourage a holistic learning of the play/themes/characterisation and abstain from drilling candidates on specific (predicted) topics. Some learners write off-topic and attempt to force pre-learnt answers/memos to fit the question. Many candidates struggle to interpret questions correctly, which leads to irrelevant responses. It is also clear that some candidates do not know the plot of the drama and produced creative essays.

If quotations from the play is used, they should be relevant to the argument.

QUESTION 4

Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.

- Interpretation of imagery needs more attention.
- "COMMENT" and "CRITICALLY DISCUSS" need to be better understood. (See Addendum B).
- *Attitude*, *mood* and *tone* should once again receive more teaching time. During the reading/discussion of the novel in class, it might be helpful to ask learners to identify the attitude of characters in an extract, to identify the mood or tone in an extract AND TO MOTIVATE THEIR ANSWERS. This will be a start to teaching them how to "comment" or "critically discuss". General answers cannot score good marks. Learners need to be specific, referring to the extract in context (unless instructed to "refer to the novel as a whole").
- Teachers should focus on all the characters and their impact on the plot.
- Candidates should be discouraged from speculation.
- Giving a succinct answer to a question cannot involve any 'story telling'. Candidates should be encouraged to provide evidence once they have made a point.
- Candidates struggle to 'decode' the questions. Perhaps an explanation of the taxonomy of the paper would be to their benefit. If they can roughly guess what the level of the question is, and they know the question words (Addendum B), they would undoubtedly improve their marks significantly.
- Candidates should be taught to PEEL even the contextual questions (see Question 3 of the discussion on Question 8).
- See Addendum C.

ADDENDUM A

TITLE OF POEM

THEME

DICTION

IMAGERY

TONE
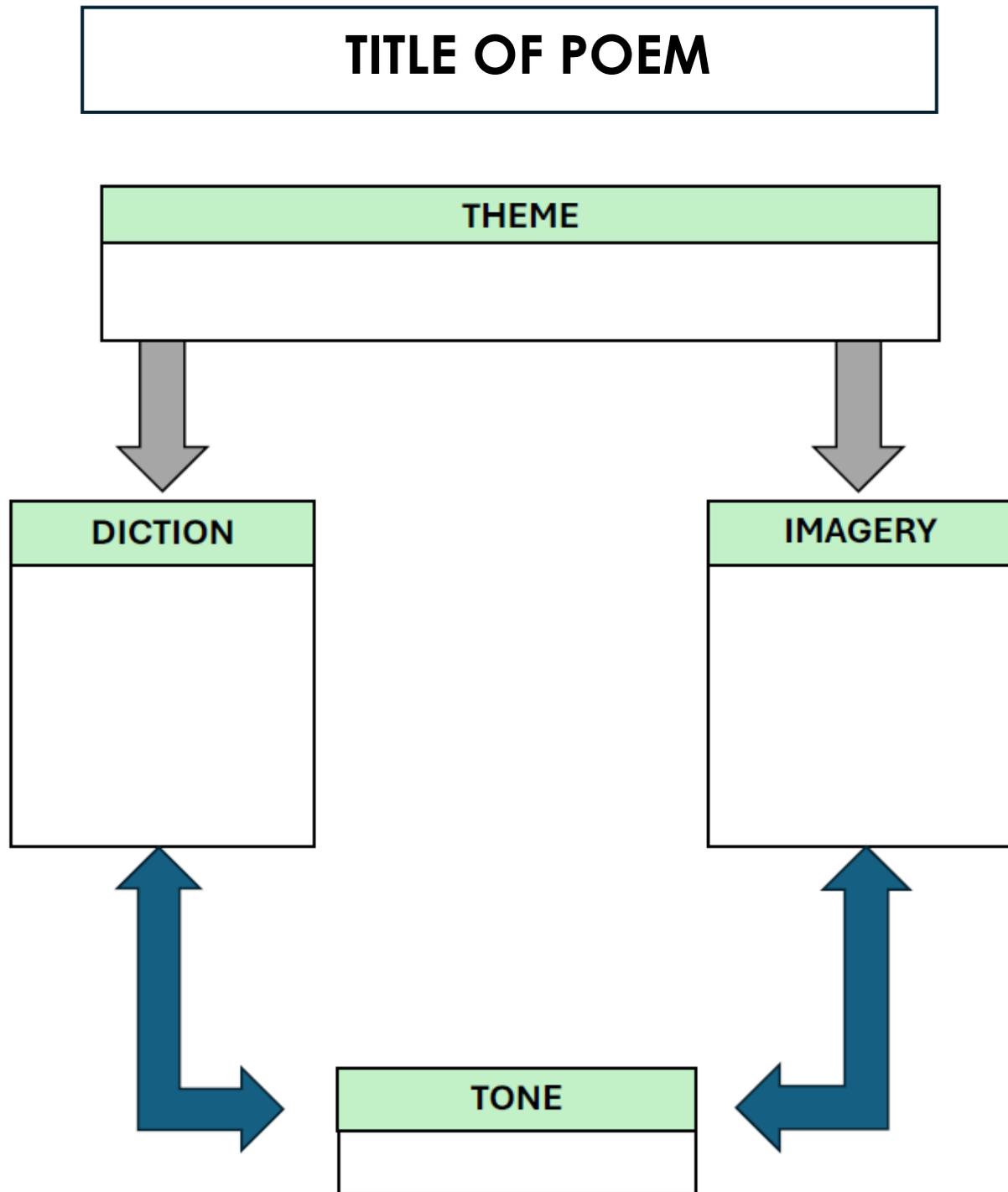
ADDENDUM B

The following is a table (which can be applied to any text) from <u>Mind the Gap *Life of PI*</u> to assist with enabling learners to understand question words.

Question words

Here are examples of question types as prescribed by CAPS for English HL

Question type	What you need to do
Literal: Questions about information that is clearly given in the text or extract from the text.	
Name characters/places/things ...	Write the specific names of characters, places, etc.
State the facts/reasons/ideas ...	Write down the information without any discussion or comments.
Give two reasons for/why ...	Write two reasons (this means the same as 'state').
Identify the character/reasons/theme ...	Write down the character's name, state the reasons, write down the theme
Describe the place/character/what happens when ...	Write down the main characteristics of something, for example: What does a place look/feel/smell like? Is a particular character kind/rude/aggressive? Write down the sequence of events ...
What does character x do when ...?	Write what happened – what the character did.
Why does character x do ...?	Given reasons for the character's action according to your knowledge of the plot.
Who is/does...?	Write the name of the character.
To whom does xx refer ...?	Write the name of the relevant character/person.
Reorganisation: Questions that need you to bring together different pieces of information in an organised way.	
Summarise the main points/ideas ...	Write the main points, keeping mark allocation in mind.
Group the common elements ...	Combine the things which share the same features.
Give an outline of	Write the main points, keeping mark allocation in mind.
Place the extract in context...	Explain how the events of the extract fit into the sequence of events of the text as a whole.
Inference: Questions that need you to interpret (make meaning of) the text using information that may not be clearly stated. This process involves thinking about what happened in different parts of the text; looking for clues that tell you more about a character, theme or symbol; and using your own knowledge to help you understand the text.	
Explain how this idea links with the theme x ...	Identify the links to the theme.
Compare the attitudes/actions of character x with character y ...	Point out the similarities and differences.

Do you agree that the...represents the contrast between...	Point out the differences and come to a conclusion which shows your agreement or lack thereof. Note that most questions like this expect you to agree, so be careful if you choose to disagree. Your position of agreement/disagreement needs detailed textual reference and substantiation.
What do the words ... suggest/reveal about...?	State what you think the meaning is, based on your understanding of the text.
How does character x react when...? Describe how something affected character x ... State how you know that character x is ...	Write down the character's reaction/what the character did/felt.
What did character x mean by the expression ...?	Explain why the character used those particular words. Make sure that you refer to specific words.
Explain the cause/effect of ...	Write the reason(s) for ... /Give the repercussions of ...
How does the line/metaphor/simile/figurative language/image/literary device affect your understanding ...?	Explain what the line/metaphor/simile/figurative language/image/literary device suggests and clarifies your understanding of the text. For similes and metaphors, discuss the comparison and how it adds meaning to the text.
What, do you think, would be the outcome/effect/etc. of an action/situation ...?	Explain what the consequences of the action/situation would be.
Account for ...	Give the reason behind an action/event.
What does the word/line suggest / imply...?	Explain what the word/line tells you and discuss the clues hinted at by the word/line...
Evaluation: Questions that require you to make a judgement based on your knowledge and understanding of the text and your own experience. There is no 'right' or 'wrong' answer to these questions, but you must give a valid reason for your opinion based on specific information given in the text.	
Discuss your view/a character's feelings/a theme ...	Consider all the information and reach a conclusion.
Do you think that ...	Give your views/opinion on the given topic.
Do you agree with/that ...	State whether or not you agree with something/someone in the tex. You need to base your opinion on specific information given in the text.
In your opinion, what ...	Your viewpoint needs to be based on specific information given in the text.
Give your views on ...	Your opinion needs to be based on specific information given in the text.
In light of the poem/novel/drama as a whole, critically discuss ...	Evaluate and assess both sides of the topic. / Investigate or examine by argument or debate, giving reasons for and against.

In your view, is ... justified?	Give reasons, based on the text, why you/a character/the writer adopt(s) a particular standpoint.
Comment on ...	To discuss or speak about ...providing evidence from the text to support your opinion.
Critically comment ...	To discuss, speak about and form an opinion about...providing evidence from the text to support your discussion.
Appreciation: Questions that ask about your emotional response to plot, characters and style. There is no 'right' or 'wrong' answer to these questions, but you must give a valid reason for your opinion based on specific information given in the text.	
How would you feel if you were character x when ...?	Imagine that you are character x and describe your emotions based on your understanding of evidence from the text.
Discuss your response to ...	Give your reaction to something and give reasons for your reaction based on evidence from the text.
Do you feel sorry for...? / Do you identify with...?	State whether you empathise with the character's emotions/situation. Are you able to have compassion for ...? Provide reasons for whether you have compassion or not.
Discuss the writer's use of style, diction and figurative language, dialogue ...	To answer this type of question, ask yourself: Does the style help me to feel/imagine what is happening/what a character is feeling? Why/why not? Give reasons for your answer.
Comment on the appropriateness/effectiveness of a figure of speech/literary device...	State why the figure of speech/literary device has impact and give reasons for your opinion. If you state that the figure of speech/literary device lacks impact, you will need to give evidence. All reasons must be clearly explained and based on evidence from the text.

[Source: unknown]

Poetry Analysis Worksheet
(Use this sheet to help you analyse any unseen poem)

Title of Poem: _____

Poet: _____

1. **First Impressions: What is your initial reaction? What emotions/thoughts does it create?**

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

2. **Literal meaning (What is it about?) Who is the speaker? What is happening?**

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

3. **Theme/Message: what deeper idea is explored?**

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

4. **Tone and mood:**

   [Tone: poet's attitude; Mood: feelings created for the reader]

   _____

   _____

   _____

_____

_____

5. **Structure and form: How does structure support meaning?**

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

6. **Poetic devices – What + How + Why**

   (Imagery – metaphor, personification, sound devices, etc.)

   Device 1: _____

   Quote: _____

   _____

   Effect: _____

   _____

   Device 2: _____

   Quote: _____

   _____

   Effect: _____

   _____

   Device 3: _____

   Quote: _____

   _____

   Effect: _____

   _____

7. **Final lines or Turning point: How does the ending reinforce the message?**

_____

_____

_____

8. **Personal interpretation: What do YOU think the poet wants readers to realise?**

_____

_____

_____

_____

9. **Final statement: One or two sentences summarising meaning and technique.**

_____

_____

_____

_____