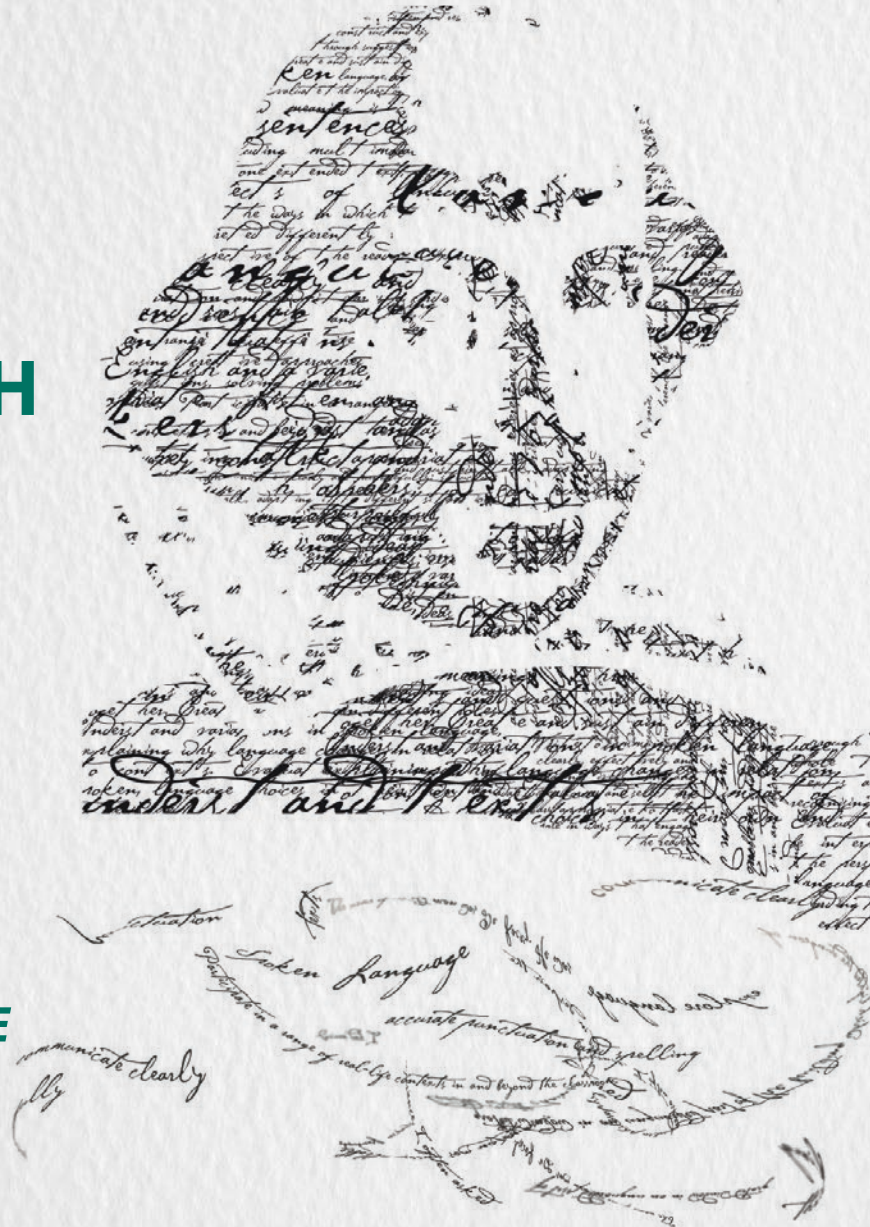


# GCSE ENGLISH

## Unit A642 Imaginative Writing

### EXEMPLAR CANDIDATE RESPONSES WITH COMMENTARIES

### BRINGING ENGLISH TO LIFE



## **CONTENTS**

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>EXEMPLAR CANDIDATE RESPONSES WITH COMMENTARIES</b>	
<b>Candidate 1</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Candidate 2</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Candidate 3</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Candidate 4</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Candidate 5</b>	<b>22</b>

## INTRODUCTION

These candidate responses demonstrate a range of abilities and marks awarded, to help teachers in their teaching and marking of the Controlled Assessment tasks. Please note that some spelling and grammatical errors have not been corrected, in order to give a true representation of the variety of responses that may be expected.

The commentaries have been prepared by the Principal Moderator for this unit in order to provide guidance on the rewarding of candidates' responses.



## EXEMPLAR CANDIDATE RESPONSES WITH COMMENTARIES

### CANDIDATE 1

#### TASK B: TEXT DEVELOPMENT

**1 Imagine one or two characters from a text you have read, heard or seen find themselves in a different setting. Write a story about what happens.**

One blazing sunny day George woke up with a lot of excitement, his mum was making breakfast whilst he was getting ready to go to a trip to his cousin's house who lived far away. George quickly gobbled up his cheese and onion sandwich out of lots of excitement because he could not defy the urge to go to his cousin's house, who he had met only once in his life.

George had a brother called Lennie. Lennie had shining blue eyes, his face was round and had a strange scar by his left eye. He had curly black hair which would dangle by his neck. George and his brother Lennie prepared to go to their cousin's house, as time went past they were travelling ahead in a car with black tinted windows, silver rims and wide windows on the sides. George and Lennie were gossiping out of boredom on the way and they finally reached their destination. As George came zooming out of the car before anyone else had, he rushed towards the house with a lot of excitement and quickly ran to ring the bell.

Lennie bought some celebration cakes for the party that they were going to have that night in their cousin's house. As they were ringing the bell and they could hear footsteps of someone coming down, they stood still and firm. Lennie peeked through the post box and shouted "Here they are, they are coming!" The door handle screamed. George couldn't wait to see. "Slim!" screamed Lennie in a joyful manner, as he saw him within seconds he went towards him and hugged him because he remembered that he seen him a long time ago when Lennie was seven years ago and Slim was eleven.

Lennie was shocked and amazed at the time because he couldn't imagine how much he had changed. As Lennie and his family came along in the house they had met everyone one by one. Finally everyone gathered along with each other in the dining hall as they were about to begin the party. The party began with a laughter as Slim cracked out with a joke. Lennie came in with a cake on his hand as everyone was staring at the mouth-watering cake. Lennie slowly and carefully set the cake on the long table.

Slim started it off by slicing up a piece of cake, everyone was very delighted to see that. George quickly munched up his cake as fast as he could because his cousin Slim was about to show him something really interesting. It was a new BMX Bike which had big black wheels with silver chains on the sides which shined into Georges eye like a sun reflecting of a mirror. "Wow!" says George in a ecstatic manner because he has never seen anything like that before, as Slim took the bike outside, George jumped on the bike and then took it for a ride all around the park.

As time flew George came back with a happy smile on his face and he couldn't even express how much of a good time he had with the bike. Slim and George came back home after the fun time they had, Slim quickly put his bike back to it's place. George had enjoyed his time throughout the day. Slim took George upstairs with Lennie aside and they went to the biggest room which was Slims favourite room. As Slim placed the key into the keyhole and then George wondered thurreley and rapidly about how the room is going to look like, but even though he still couldn't just figure it out, as the key was twisting George couldn't resist it as the door opened wide, Lennie and George got shocked because their eyes caught the beautiness of the room straight away, as they stepped into the room, the fragrance of the room was so refereshing and so beautiful. Lennie felt so good after entering the room: the four walls of the room were white and there was a slight breeze coming through the window.

George was really exhausted. He wanted to lean his back on something, he saw a tall pillar in the corner of the room by the bookshelves, as he next to the pillar in the corner and was very temped to lean on it. George slowly sat down on the floor and leaned on the pillar. Suddenly he felt the pillar moving and George got terrified and quickly stood back up and wanted to find out what was going on. While the pillar was going in at the same time the bookshelve was turning and George got absolutely shocked.

George slowly approached towards the bookshelves to see what had happened all of a sudden. He had seen a book and picked it up, there was a big and strange rectangle space just under him which was closed and all of a sudden George dropped inside. Out of the blue there appeared a mysterious figure which said in a deep tone. "You have only 7 hours". George then woke up from a sudden fall from the room.

Slim and Lennie came back into the room to see how Slim is going on. Lennie called out for George in a slight soft tone. There were no replies, Lennie was a bit scared and worried because George didn't answer back. Lennie walked towards the book shelve and there was a big space in the ground and stared at it for a moment.

George was still intensed and wondered about where he was and what world he was in. George didn't just understand what was actually going on and then he thought about opening the door. As he opened the door and went outside, there were tall buildings and people around him were wearing old fashion clothes and the whole area was full of people.

This reminded George about the olden days because his dad used to tell him a lot about how the people were in those days. George still couldn't wonder where he was. It was in a place where he had never been before. As George went back in the house. There were spider webs on the corner of the walls, the window's were wide and the curtains were dirty and filthy. George suddenly heard something screeching, he realised it was the doors keyhole as someone was attempting to open it.

"DAD!". Said George in a happy voice. He couldn't believe who he had seen in an blink of an eye. George happily went next to his dad just to check if it was actually him. It was him because he had felt him. After a moment George realised that it couldn't be him because in reality he actually passed away 1999 so he thought he is back to the future. Time went rapidly as the sky went dark and it was time for George to get to bed. George was left alone in his bed as there was no-one next to him.

George thought of an plan that he is going to try to go back to the normal world. Straight away George got out of bed after a disastrous day. The time was over and it was time for him to go back and there was a way back, so that was the last time he would see his dad.

## COMMENTARY

This is an ambitious attempt to write a story about George and Lennie from *Of Mice and Men* when they were children. The candidate sets the scene in great detail using vocabulary which is varied but sometimes imprecise.

Each time there is a new idea the candidate starts a new paragraph but should try to make clearer links between them. The response lacks an effective structure and is too long; the first half could work well as a story about a visit to a cousin without adding the section about George travelling back in time to meet his father.

The sentences are often extended through the use of complex connectives but tend to follow a similar pattern and are rarely used for effect. Complex regular words are almost always spelled correctly but punctuation between the sentences would need to be more consistent.

(16+8)

**2 (b) Imagine you visit the setting you have used in your story. Write a detailed description of this setting, either in prose or in poetry, expressing your thoughts and feelings about it.**

It was a sunny day, the clouds looked as soft as marsh mallow, as the sky was blue and the birds were flying everywhere. The buildings are big, they have drainpipes going around, the buildings were clear white and the windows are as clear as mirror. The people were dressed up as the olden days. It was a sparkling day and people had smiles on their faces. There were fresh green trees and there were different types of fruit on different trees, the smell of the fresh flowers were so sweet that it felt like as if you were in heaven. When you feel the pineapples on the trees it felt very spiky and it was Brownish Gold.

In Slim's house there were few rooms, one of the rooms was very big and the smell was so attractive because of the cool fragrance and there two big windows. The colour of the four walls were cream. The curtains of the room was blue and long which would cover the light from coming through. They lived in a quiet and peaceful house. There were two big cupboards in his room he used to keep his clothes in and it was especially made and imported from Japan.

## COMMENTARY

There is a significant imbalance between the two pieces in this folder. The candidate would have been well advised to divide his time and effort more evenly between them to ensure they were both of the same standard.

The response is straightforward, with some attempt to make choices of vocabulary to describe the setting more effectively. There is little sense of direction; the piece ends as abruptly as it begins with no real sense of development, even though it is divided into two separate paragraphs.

Sentences are less grammatically accurate than in the first piece and the punctuation between them is even more inconsistent. The piece would benefit from some attempt to vary sentence structure for effect. Complex regular words, however, are almost always spelled correctly.

**(13+7)**

**TOTAL MARK: 22**

## CANDIDATE 2

### TASK A: MEDIA

- 1 Write an article for the local newspaper entitled “The Worst Place in Britain” in which you highlight the problems and shortcomings of a particular town or area.**

#### Worst town in Britain

To others the town of Reading was seen as just a lower class town. Being here now, calling this place a lower class town would be an understatement!

I was a foreigner in this land, with buildings and streets more empty than human life in space. People so poorly dressed I mistook their clothes for washing up rags. It only takes ten seconds to realise that you are in downgraded version of a sewer arriving here. I am not surprised that this town has won ‘Britain’s Worst Town’ for the second year in a row.

Reading was labelled with the highest crime rate with a whopping 73% of the town’s population committing some sort of crime. As I arrived in the town I felt surprised as the people here did not fit the stereotype that was created by this title, they surpassed it.

A problem for the town could be that it seems unable to progress for the future. Even though it has the potential as students are leaving school with some GCSE’s but seem oblivious to A-levels as there are very few colleges and sixth forms for students to take their education to another level, therefore leading them into a life of drugs and crime from a young age. There was reports of a lack of jobs but at recent meetings the question was raised that it could be a lack of good schooling as recent surveys show that 47% of residents don’t have any qualifications.

Reading was founded by two women who call themselves the warner sisters back in 1739. Therefore Reading has always been seen as a outcast town as in those times women doing more than house work was outrageous. Reading have not seem to have lost their laughing stock reputation.

In Reading Tuesday nights are no different to Friday nights if anything worse with waves of people chanting and parading, though we are far from the carnival season. On my way home from eating out I was put at a halt when an army of these hooligans marched around the road blocking the way for anyone to pass as if they had taken boarder force into their own hands.



The police try to do their best to keep authority in the town but it seems to be that there is no respect for them which could be another contributing factor on to why this town is in such terrible state. It seems that this town is deprived of options and also the town seems to be blind as the people here don't know what direction there going in. What this place is lacking is a real leader, a shepherd to herd them together and take them places.

There is a trend in Reading where being in a gang seems to be seen as a lifestyle instead of a crime. Gang culture in this town is pulling it to the ground like a dead weight and their going down quicker than Usain bolt on the 100 metres.

As my charity work in Reading came to an end the streets still derelict buildings and still my wardrobe has more merchandise than this town. Reluctant to leave but there are a few unique things about this place such as the history and the whole layout of this town is completely different but unfortunately I will remember Reading for the amount of crime there is also the drugs and gang violence and a lot of peoples lack of respect will stick in my mind but most of all I will remember the lack of hope they have in themselves, in each other and in their future which is the most sad of all things but I am glad to leave this town and return to the country I know as Britain.

## COMMENTARY

The candidate writes confidently, adopting a slightly ironic tone which suits the purpose of the article and its likely audience. The varied vocabulary chosen is often effective and conveys the candidate's ideas clearly.

To gain a higher grade the candidate would need to show greater control of sentence structure. The meaning is sometimes unclear because of grammatical or idiomatic errors. Clearer links between the paragraphs would help to create a greater sense of coherence.

**(19+8)**

**2 (a) Write a letter to the local newspaper arguing strongly against the views expressed in the article.**

.....

586 Imaginative road

Reading RG3 4GY

Dear Article writer:

I am writing in response to article that I read recently in your newspaper and as a longtime resident of our great town Reading I will not let such words be spoke about Reading without a defense and to be honest I am quite disgusted on your views about our hometown.

I completely disagree with your point about how empty the streets are and how poorly dressed people around here are but I would like to say though are town is not very wealthy the people here are very proud and the streets and buildings are full of life and lots of culture. You also made a comment stating that Reading has a 73% crime rate but what was not mentioned in the article is that Reading is the MOST multicultural town in Britain.

The situation with the colleges is out of the town control as the government cuts meant that some of the educational facilities have been shut down but for the ones that are open I went and asked them for their progress results and it came out on average 91% of students pass at GCSE level and 79% of students are passing their A-levels. So with this information you can see that Reading's future generation are doing well for themselves.

What you witnessed on the Tuesday night was celebrations of Reading Fc getting promoted into the premiership which could be a massive step for the town as it will attract more people also it will make the town more money with all the new people who will want to come and see our unbelievable team.

I can assure you that gangs and drugs in Reading are in the huge minority section. To round it up Reading is an amazing town which has lots of history, culture, strong community and a successful football team and I can guarantee if you came and visited again and toured around Reading with someone who knows the place. You would love it.

Sincerely,... (Resident of Reading)

## COMMENTARY

Similar strengths and areas for development are apparent in the response to the satellite task. Although the opening address and closing salutation are slightly clumsy, the candidate does use the letter format to organise ideas effectively. Almost all the paragraphs are unified by one main idea but need to have clearer links made between them.

The vocabulary is suitably formal and usually conveys thought and meaning clearly with spelling that is accurate for complex regular words. The candidate could improve by exercising greater control of sentence structures and avoiding idiomatic errors.

(18+8)

## TOTAL MARK: 26



## CANDIDATE 3

### TASK A: MEDIA

- 1 **Write an article for the local newspaper entitled “The Worst Place in Britain” in which you highlight the problems and shortcomings of a particular town or area.**

Dirty dangerous and full of drugs.

Surprisingly, Reading had actually got worse since I had last visited the town in November. Reading, the concrete jungle, has been awarded Britain's worst town for the second year in a row and on my return to Reading, I can see why.

Reading has a terrible unemployment problem. Statistics show that 8 out of 10 people, who could work, are not in employment. The schools and colleges in the area could be to blame. MPs and inspectors have said that the schools in this area are embarrassing and they need some serious work done to them. The schools have only got worse since I last visited them and the students have got more out of control. Lizzie, the year 11 maths teacher, has said 'we won't get anywhere with the kids without help'. But who is going to help?

Those children who remain the schools in Reading that have not been taken out to go and work, are going to need lessons on how to pass a GCSE, not how to sell drugs. These children need to be offered opportunities and chances. There is no hope for us when our future has no manners or prospects. The government promises help. They do not deliver.

Perhaps it is safe to conclude that the poor education prospects have contributed to the high crime rate recorded in this town. All crime in Reading is caused by young people under the age of 18, is this the schools' fault? People in Reading seem to think it is okay to steal, however, they do not seem to think about the people that are affected by their actions. In Reading people that are trying to earn money and save up enough to move away from this war ground cannot do this because their houses are being broken into frequently. With over ten burglaries a night reported to local police, residents are struggling to defend their properties.

But what is causing this? Is the parenting to blame or is it the schools? People need to be educated in how to build a future for themselves and not destroying others. There are over 350 crimes a week in Reading. Crimes range from burglary and muggings to not making children go to school. That may not seem all bad, but it is still a crime. You only have to speak to the victims to understand the problems.

Reading is like a town that you would see in a movie screen but it is actually real. From the first time I visited crime is visible from the very start; binge drinking is very popular here. In Reading over 500 children under the age of 16 have been out on the streets drinking alcohol and committing more crime. 'wasted' Harley, a young lad from the town said 'drinking isn't bad, we're just trying to have a good time on a Friday and Saturday night'. But statistics show more crimes are committed after alcohol is present in your system. There are more alcohol related crimes in reading than the number of students passing their GCSE's.

Walking through Reading is daunting. The streets are colourful, but with paint from a spray can instead of the council. Graffiti is everywhere and you cannot see a blank brick. It is a canvas for thugs. You can see litter every step you take whilst looking at all the spat out chewing gum on the floor. The smell in Reading is similar to a brewery and looks like one to. After a Friday night you will have to kick your way through the sidewalk through all the empty beer cans just to get somewhere. Reading is famous for beer but beer is becoming a problem.

The government need to do something about this town. They need to invest some money in it to make it a more respectable place for people to live, money needs to be funded into the schools and into the children's future whilst at the same time helping the people that deserve better. Programs to help people stop crime and invest in their future need to be put in place because this town needs help. I hope my next visit to the town pleasantly surprises me.

## COMMENTARY

The candidate begins this piece with a clear focussed opening that sets the scene for what is to come. Ideas are developed in some detail in paragraphs which are generally unified but would benefit from more effective links between them.

Good control of different sentence structures is usually shown. Sentences are confidently varied in length and type for effect and punctuation is usually accurate between them. There are a few occasions, however, where more ambitious sentence structures are slightly garbled. Punctuation between sentences is almost always accurate but there is less success with the punctuation of speech.

An appropriate tone is adopted with a good variety of vocabulary used which is almost always accurately spelled. Sometimes, however, the candidate could have chosen more precise words to express key ideas.

**(20+10)**

**2 (a) Write a letter to the local newspaper arguing strongly against the views expressed in the article.**

Dear Reporter,

Following reading your letter, and hearing the things you have written in your article about my town, I am writing to you about how outraged disgusted and embarrassed I am. I am disappointed to hear about your views about Reading, however I strongly disagree.

Reading has over 200 police men on duty a week. Also there are over 20 neighbourhood watch teams. How can you suggest the residents do not feel safe? How can you suggest the Police are not doing their job

I was also disgusted at some of the words your used in a newspaper to describe our hometown and 'concrete jungle.' It is not a word that is appropriate. As a resident who lives in the town I would not like to hear these things said about where I live, would you? I am also writing to you to express my feelings about your views on the people of reading. Suggesting that it could be the parents fault that the children don't go to school is unfair and a stereo type. As a parent of two who children attend the school every day I was appalled to hear this.

I would also like to challenge the views you expressed about the binge drinking in reading. As a resident from reading who has never witnessed or seen any binge drinking I find it hard to agree with you. You may be responsible for convincing parents that there is a problem that does not exist. This is a sober town.

And what frustrates me the most? There is not a lot of graffiti in reading and there are regular clean ups from the local residents to keep it clean. So I disagree. In fact local residents get together regularly to help with some of the problems in reading that you have made sound a lot worse than they actually are. I believe you have taken a very negative attitude towards the town from the beginning. I believe the report was biased.

What you have done to this town may cause damage no one can repair. You may have created the reputation of the town you say we have.

Yours frustrated

.....

## COMMENTARY

The letter achieves a similar standard to the core task. The beginning and end of the letter are clear but could be more carefully shaped to create a greater impact. There is some sense of unity to each paragraph but this could be improved as could the links between the paragraphs which are sometimes too similar.

The candidate uses a range of vocabulary to create a suitably outraged tone for the letter, spelling complex regular words accurately. Although there is some repetition, sentences are varied effectively and punctuation between them is accurate. The accurate use of a wider range of punctuation would improve the clarity of the piece.

(19+10)

**TOTAL MARK: 30**

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## CANDIDATE 4

### TASK B: TEXT DEVELOPMENT

- 1** *Imagine one or two characters from a text you have read, heard or seen find themselves in a different setting. Write a story about what happens.*

Far far away, on a magical island, where the whole forrest glowed when the sun went down and the waterfalls fell from the skies and the fruits from the plants were as sweet as the sweetest honey, was a boy who had awoken to find that he had no memories of his past.

As he stood up after his long slumber he was biwilderred by his surroundings. He saw beautiful flowers in all colors of the rainbow which had sensational aromas all erupting into the air. He rattled his brain to try and remember any strand of memory that could suggest anything about his past. He felt he was getting closer to something until...No, it slipped away. He tried again and finally he remembered the one thing that no person could possibly forget - his name. Romeo was his name, a name he knew well enough to remember.

Romeo looked up and saw tall trees high above his head which had funny looking fruits in all shapes and sizes that swung in the canopy of the forest. Around him were small hedges with cherry looking fruits, multi-coloured and seemed to glow. He looked at himself and saw he was wearing pure white garments with gold patterns embroidered on to them which seemed to sparkle as the radiant sun reflected off their seemingly perfect wavy lines. The only words that seemed to escape from his mouth, in his confused yet relaxed state, were, 'Where am I?'

The forest seemed to breathe as Romeo ventured into the unknown wonders of the magical island. The greenland felt like it was going to go on for ever until he arrived at an open space which had a shimmering lake with a waterfall at the other side that fell from the clear blue sky. The sprinkles from the white decending waters felt like heaven on Romeo's face. He walked slowly towards the other side of lake, where the water was calm, and knelt down to wash his sleepy face. Once the water become calm again he looked at the reflection of himself and thought about what his past was like. He pondered about what he might have been like and where he might have come from before he was suddenly washed of all his memories. It ocured to him that this might all just be a dream but doughted that thought after punching himself and feeling the pain.



All his thoughts were interrupted when he saw ripples form in the clear waters of the lake, blurring the reflection of his image. He looked up to see beautiful young girl probably about his age, a couple of meters away, throwing pebbles into the lake. Standing up, Romeo could now see her long silky blonde hair dancing in the soft breeze and her dazzling blue eyes that had the shiny reflection of the lake. She turned to face Romeo and could feel his heart beat race and skip a beat. He noticed that she was wearing similar garments to his own, with the same golden line patterns. Romeo's mouth fell open as he looked at her beauty in full perspective and was feeling dazed when she smiled at him showing off her dimples.

'Romeo is your name, is it not?' she asked in the most elegant tone. Romeo was so stunned when he heard this he just stood there frozen as if he was suffering from paralysis. Seeing this, the girl couldn't help but giggle slightly. This seemed to snap Romeo out of it and gather his nerves to reply, 'Yes, it is,' he said taking a short break then carried on. 'How did you know that?' The girl frowned at him as if he had said something wrong then replied, 'I know many things about you like where you're from how you got here and how you can get back home.'

Romeo felt happy inside as he thought about how beautiful and clever she was. He thought about what she just said but it didn't make him feel any emotions because he had no memories of home. 'I can help you get back home but you will forget everything you have experienced here and you will also forget...me,' she said, in an almost sad tone. All sorts of things were going through Romeo's head, he didn't want to leave but he also wondered about home. 'Why do you seem sad?' Romeo asked then waited for a reply. The girl stayed quiet for a few moments then replied quietly, 'I don't get many visitors here.' Romeo could see the sadness in her eyes and replied sympathetically, 'I will stay with you, I will stay with you forever.'

As Romeo looked at the girl, he saw she was beginning to turn transparent and also saw that she was blushing even though she was looking down at the forest floor. 'No, you mustn't, you must get back home. Follow the glowing path through the forest and it will lead you to a portal that will take you safely home, but remember the portal will close if you don't get there in time.' She said still looking down. Romeo could now see completely through her and knew she was going to disappear soon. 'Wait!' Romeo said desperately, 'What's your name?' Fortunately she replied, 'Juliet,' and looked up to meet Romeo's eyes. Romeo just met this girl but he felt connected and without thinking, he threw himself forward to kiss her but as he did so she turned into a burst of light and disappeared.

Romeo had moved on further into the forest following the trail of light that Juliet had told him about. Looking at it made him remember her and wonder whether he would ever see her again. He thought about being able to go home and recover his memories made him feel good but where he remembered Juliet, he was

confused with what he wanted. Juliet's presence had given him a new kind of happiness and he wanted to hold on to it and feared about it being gone. As he went on into the depth of the forest the sun began to set and the red light rays pierced through the gaps of the trees giving the surroundings a red glow. He could smell the wonderful aromas in the air which relaxed him and helped him think better. After he took a few more steps he began to feel weak and tired as if the smells were tranquilising him making him sleepy. He walked a few more meters and felt like all the energy in him was sucked out. He fell to the floor and his eyes closed engulfing his mind with darkness.

Romeo woke up startled and felt like how he felt earlier but he could still remember everything which meant he had to get to the portal. He stood up and could see a green glowing circle floating just above the ground a couple of meters away. He approached it slowly and wondered if this was the portal. He stood up and could see a green glowing circle floating just above the ground a couple of meters away. He approached it slowly and wondered if this was the portal. How did he get there? He looked into it and could see images of people who looked very familiar. He stretched out his hand to touch them but as he made contact his fingers were swallowed into the portal making him jump and draw back his hand. He came to the conclusion that this was the portal but he didn't want to leave. He stood there staring into the portal sad and confused.

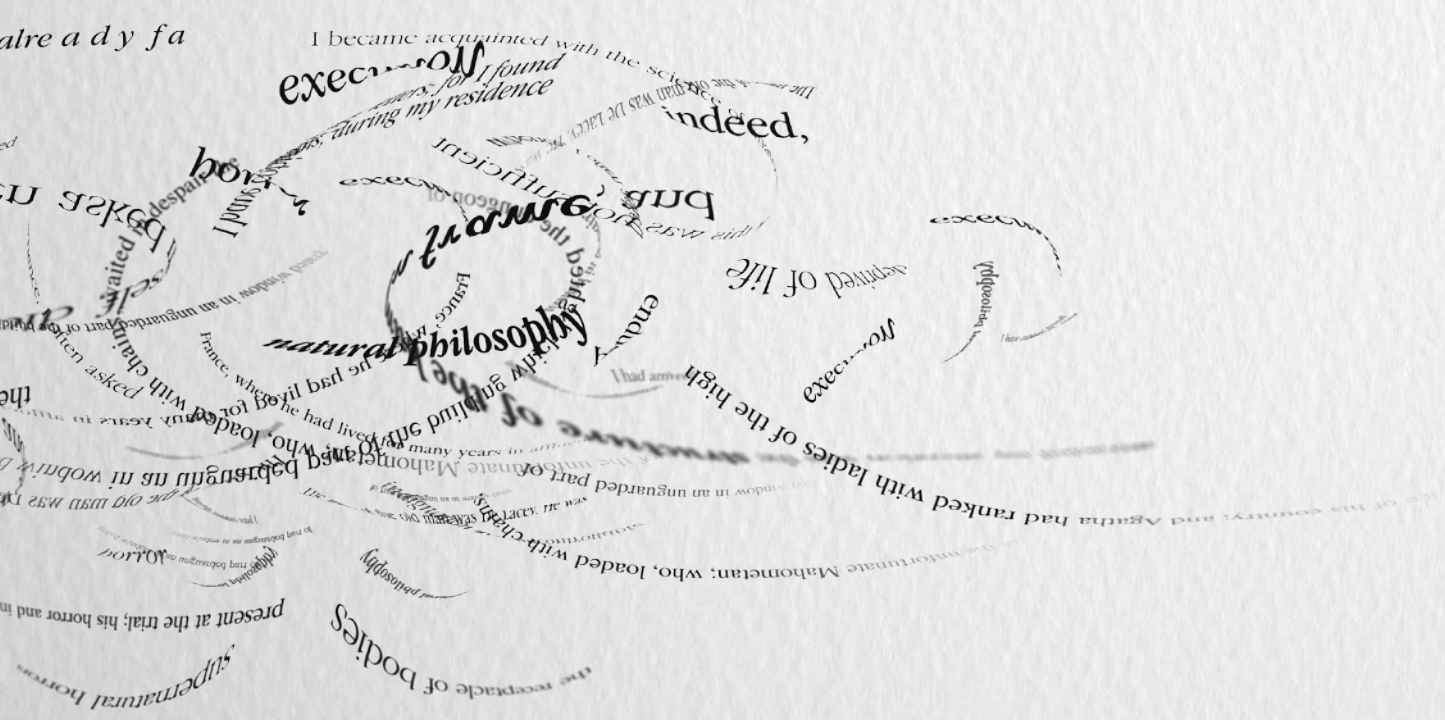
'It's your home' a familiar voice said from behind him. Romeo turned around and saw Juliet strolling towards him making everything around her glow as if she had a bright aura. Romeo was astonished to see her appear from nowhere but was so full of happiness he didn't even care. 'You must go quickly, the portal won't stay open for much longer, you must leave.' Romeo glanced at the portal then back at Juliet and then back at the portal. He had to make a choice. He noticed that the portal began to shrink but was still big enough for him to pass through. Romeo was in a tight spot, he couldn't make his decision that would change his life for ever. 'What are you waiting for?' Juliet asked as she walked closer to Romeo. 'I want to stay with you' Romeo replied looking into Juliet's eyes. 'No, go, people will worry about you, you must leave.' Romeo felt overwhelmed by Juliet's beauty and stepped forward and could feel her soft breathing and he leaned forward and met her lips with his own. Romeo felt the soft sensation as he kissed her and felt as though he was flying. Romeo took one last look at the portal and knew it was his last chance. He turned to face Juliet and whispered in her ear, 'I choose you.'

## COMMENTARY

In this piece we see Romeo waking up in a strange fairyland setting. The story includes so much detailed description of the setting that it overwhelms the narrative drive and makes the piece less engaging. Nonetheless the description is confident and has enough assurance to achieve Grade A even though it lacks subtlety.

The vocabulary is imaginative and there is some effective use of linguistic devices. The clearly linked paragraphs give the piece a sense of coherence but new ones are not always begun when there is a new speaker.

(24+12)



**2 (b) Imagine you visit the setting you have used in your story. Write a detailed description of this setting, either in prose or in poetry, expressing your thoughts and feelings about it.**

This is a poem on the setting of my story. It explores my thoughts and feelings.

All around me there's beauty  
Flowers, blue, yellow and green  
I feel it's my duty  
To explore the scene  
I see fruits that are round  
And fruits that are square  
The wind makes no sound  
As it swoops through the air  
I'm engulfed by tall trees  
That block out the sun  
I feel like I can't see  
Like there's nowhere to run.

I venture the unknown  
Like a curious cat  
Am I all alone  
No, I have doubt in that  
Because I hear animals  
Birds, frogs and more  
I hope there's no cannibals  
For my protection is poor

I come to a waterfall  
That falls from the sky  
I thought I'd seen it all  
But this is a spectacle to the eye  
The aromas I smell  
Seem to sooth me inside  
I've fallen under a spell  
The smells tranquilise

I fall, face down  
Like a motionless toy.  
There's no one around  
To help this poor boy.

## COMMENTARY

This piece illustrates well the perils of presenting poetry in a controlled assessment folder. Although it is a confident piece with some effective touches, the piece lacks the assurance required for grade A, making this an imbalanced folder of work.

There are clear links with the core task but this piece adds little that was not in the first piece. It has a focussed opening and some clear development but would benefit from a much stronger ending.

The vocabulary is varied and sometimes effective but, at other times, the rhyme scheme forces some clumsy choices of words and phrases. There is enough here, however, to award the piece a low grade B.

**(19+10)**

**TOTAL MARK: 33**

## CANDIDATE 5

### TASK B: TEXT DEVELOPMENT

- 1** *Imagine one or two characters from a text you have read, heard or seen find themselves in a different setting. Write a story about what happens.*

The voices came close now. George raised the gun and listened to the voices. He steadied it and brought the muzzle of it close to the back of Lennie's head. His hand shook violently. He tried. He couldn't do it, he just couldn't pull the trigger.

Most of the guards stationed on the bottom floor of East Block in San Quentin State Prison were reasonable, a couple were not. The reasonable guards were surprised that, despite his mental retardation, Lennie had been given the death penalty having being found guilty of attempted rape and murder. The unreasonable ones could not care less. There were three guards who covered the day shift, Evans, Wilkinson and Smith. Overall they were nice men. They spoke to the inmate rather than shouted at them and they tried to keep peace on the block. The two guards who were on the night shift, Taylor and Johnson, were brutal, as merciless as lions with their prey.

Lennie had been beaten near to death by Curley and the rest when Slim stepped in. "Do the right thing Curley. Stop this now. Hand him over to the police, you don't want to be getting into trouble yourself now do ya!" Slim had insisted

Cautious of Lennie when he first arrived at San Quentin, the guards initially watched their back around him. It was his sheer size that caused concern. But they soon realised that Lennie was not going to cause too much trouble. Lennie was desperately unhappy, he spent many hours rocking loudly in the corner of his cell howling as loud as thunder and calling for George. He was terrified of being cooped up in a tiny cell. The cell was only 48 square feet, 7 inches tall the size of a walk-in wardrobe. It was a small place for such a large man. The cell was pretty bare, all it contained were the essentials, a bed, a rickety desk, grubby toilet and a sink. And on the walls there were some shelves, a shiny piece of metal for a mirror and a tatty old picture of a farm. This minuscule room had been Lennie's home for the last year and a half.

Continual sobbing had caused irritation to the guards and other inmates, one inmate in particular, Frank Jacobs. He called himself "Wild Wolf" even had it tattooed on his left arm. He knew how to push the prison guards buttons, he knew how to annoy them. So he did. He spat directly in the faces of the guards and even urinated through the bars of his cell. One night he got frustrated by

Lennie's horrific howling and he went crazy, as crazy as a rat in a trap. He started to rip apart his cell. His punishment was a night wearing a strait jacket in the padded room at the end of the hall. And Lennie's was a beating by Taylor and Johnson until he was black and blue all over.

Slowly Lennie learned to look after himself. His howling became soft sobs and he stopped repetitively asking for ketchup with every meal, he knew it would earn him some hard raps around the knuckles from Taylor. He stopped asking for beans when he woke up in the middle of the night if he woke up. Lennie still believed that George was coming to get him and take him to the farm they had always spoke about. He figured out the guards who would listen to him ramble on about the farm, and the ones who wouldn't. Evans was particularly kind to Lennie, this was mostly because he understood Lennie. He had a relative banged up in a booby hatch, it was him who gave Lennie the picture of the farm and pinned it up in his cell.

Most of Lennie's happiness came from the kindness shown by Evans, the tatty picture of the small farm which he cherished and the odd mouse which scurried under the bars of his cell. He kept them and petted them until he killed them and then continued to keep them. The guards knew that when there was a bad stench coming from the Lennie's cell that they would have to search him to find the dead mouse. The months passed and Lennie adjusted to his life on death row. He would see the prisoners walk down the the hall and never return but he never understood what had happened to them.

Finally it was Lennie's turn.

Evans came to the bars of Lennie's cell and asked to come in. "Can I talk to you Lennie?" Evans asked "Sure" Lennie replied keenly. Evans sat down next to Lennie and put his hands on his knees and Lennie copied. "Lennie, do you know what happens to the guys who walk down the hall and never come back?" He questioned. "No" Lennie answered. "Well you have nothing to worry about, tomorrow a good friend of mine is coming to see you just to see how big you are. Then you can have your evening meal, What's your favourite food Lennie, you can choose anything, anything at all." "What anything? Even ketchup?" Lennie asked. "Yup Lennie, even ketchup, as much ketchup as you like, All the ketchup in the world if you want and all the beans." Lennie looked amazed "Wow" he said "All the beans and all the ketchup?" "Yup and even some cake after if you want" Evans encouraged "Yes please I...I love cake" Lennie stated. "Okay then Lennie that can all be arranged nice and easy."

"Now after my friend has come to see you and after you've had your nice evening meal, tomorrow we are going to take you to a very special place. We are going to do something to you that will put you to sleep and you know that farm you always talk about?" "Yes" Lennie replied quickly "Well when you wakeup, you are going to be on that farm with your friend George and you're going to be able to

tend to all the rabbits" Evans told him "Really?" Lennie asked excitedly "Yes Lennie exactly where you want to be" Evans said quietly as he left the cell, his heart feeling as heavy as lead.

Returning a short while later, with someone with him Evans said "Lennie I would like you to meet Jack, he is going to look and see how big you are." "Hi Lennie is it okay if I take some measurements?" Jack asked. "Why do you need to do that?" Lennie replied. "Because I know you're a big fella but I need to know how big you really are." Jack took the tape measure to Lennie's neck "Bloody hell he's huge!" Jack exclaimed. "I know, he's a tank" Evans said chuckling. "Right Lennie almost done, I've got your height and width, now I just need you to step onto these scales." Lennie stepped onto the scales, almost breaking them, but Jack could still make out how heavy he was. "That's it Lennie, all done, I will see you tomorrow."

"Right Lennie I am going to see Jack out and then I'll bring you your meal okay?" Evans told Lennie "Okay boss." When Evans and Jack were out of earshot they discussed Lennie's hanging. "This is going to be a difficult one, I need to get these measurements right otherwise this could go bad, it needs to be a clean break and with the width of Lennie's neck it's not going to be easy." Jack remarked. "Well can you do it? Because if you do it ain't gonna be pretty." "I know it needs to be perfect, but I ain't never done anyone as big as this and the good thing is I will never have to do it again cause that new gas chamber is being put in next week" Jack said.

Evans arrived with Lennie's meal "here you go Lennie here's your beans, a bottle of ketchup and your cake," would you like a drink of water with your meal?" Evans asked. "Yes please boss." "Okay then Lennie give me a minute." Evans came back with Lennie's water and asked, "Hey Lennie do you mind if I join you?" "No boss" Lennie replied. Evans sat down on Lennie's bed next to Lennie. "So Lennie, tell me again about this farm you and your friend George are going to get." Evans told him. "Okay boss, well me and George are going to get a farm and I'm going to tend to all the rabbits" Lennie concentrated hard and between mouthfuls he repeated the story he had told him before. By the time Lennie had finished his story Evans was trying his hardest to hold back his tears. Evans had grown very fond of Lennie over the last year and a half and he was sorry to see him go. "Look Lennie I'm not going to be here tomorrow because I'm going to a training course, so I am going to shake your hand and say good bye, that okay?" Evans asked. "Sure boss" Evans gave Lennie a long strong handshake and left.

Lennie small was the biggest and the last person to ever hang at San Quentin State Prison.



## COMMENTARY

This is a good example of a sophisticated response to the task. The situation is quickly established in the first few lines and then developed poignantly to an appropriate and effective ending. Paragraphs could, however, sometimes be organised more accurately, particularly for speech.

A wide range of vocabulary is spelled correctly and used to convey ideas subtly and effectively. Sentence structures are varied effectively but would benefit from a wider range of punctuation within the sentence to clarify the meaning. Overall, despite some areas for improvement, this is an engaging and effective piece.

(25+12)

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**2 (c) Write a feature article for a newspaper or magazine set after the events of your story in which someone is interviewed about what happened. The interviewee may or may not be a character from your story.**

### Disabled man is the last to hang at San Quentin State Prison

Lennie Small became the last person to ever hang at San Quentin State Prison, its governor confirmed today. In a statement he said "At approximately 3pm this afternoon, Lennie Small, 36, was successfully executed by hanging, becoming the last person to ever do so at this prison. While the state of California still recognises hanging as an acceptable method of execution, from next week all inmate will be executed by gas in our newly purpose built gas chamber.

Small, convicted of attempted rape and murder, only spent eighteen months on death row and it is believed that he was held on East Block. He is a huge man in stature and it is also known that he is mentally retarded.

The hanging was witnessed by approximately 100 people, this included prison officials, friends and family of the public and the general public. One eyewitness, Slim, a jerkline skinner who used to work with Lennie, described the event, he said "when he was brought into the room, the only noise was his and the wardens' footsteps on the wooden floor. I could see his hands were already cuffed behind his back. I think everyone expected trouble when he reached the top of the steps because he is such a huge man. But surprisingly there was none. There was no answer when he was asked for his final words, he just shook his head. He stayed calm, too calm, almost like he knew he was going to a better place.

The execution was presided over by Warden Clinton Duffy, an experienced warden who has supervised many hangings. When asked he quoted. "We used the long drop method, this is where the prisoner is dropped from an exact measured length. This length is calculated according to the prisoner's weight and his physique. The force of the drop combined with the position on the noose knot below the left ear broke his neck, causing instant unconsciousness and a rapid death. The prisoner did not fight against the straps nor did he wheeze or whistle for air. He did not urinate or defecate. It was a very successful hanging considering the size of the prisoner."

Whilst that may be the case, this execution has still once again raised the question "Should the state of California execute people who have committed brutal acts but have the mentality of children. Small believed to have an IQ of fewer than 60 (70 is considered the threshold for mental retardation) and indeed he has committed brutal acts. No doubt this case will be followed by various groups of people who will be calling for the legislation to bar the execution of individuals with mental retardation.





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