AQA
Realising potential

GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Reading resource

Paper 1 – Question 4

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Notes

Question 4 mark scheme

Assessment Objective 4: Evaluate texts critically and support this with appropriate textual references		
Level	**Overview statement**	**Skills descriptors**
Level 4 Perceptive & detailed 16-20 marks	In this level, critical evaluation will be **perceptive** and **detailed**	• Critically evaluates the text in a detailed way • Offers examples from the text to explain views convincingly • Analyses effects of a range of writer's choices • Selects a range of relevant quotations to validate views
Level 3 Clear & relevant 11-15 marks	In this level, critical evaluation will be **clear** and **consistent**	• Clearly evaluates the text • Offers examples from the text to explain views clearly • Clearly explains the effect of the writer's choices • Selects some relevant quotations to support views
Level 2 Some attempts 6-10 marks	In this level, there will be **some** evaluative comments	• Attempts evaluative comment on the text • Offers an example from the text to explain view(s) • Attempts to comment on writer's methods • Selects some quotations, which occasionally support views
Level 1 Simple & limited 1-5 marks	In this level, there will be **simple**, personal comment.	• Simple evaluative comment on the text • Offers simple example from the text which may explain view • Simple mention of the writer's methods • Simple references or textual details
Level 0 0 marks	No relevant comments offered in response to the statement, no impressions, no evaluation.	

How do I approach the question?

About the question:

- Question 4 is worth 20 marks – you should spend around 25 minutes on this question.
- You will always be asked to look at a section of the extract, not the whole thing.
- You will always be given a statement from a student/teacher/reviewer, giving their opinion on that part of the text.
- You will always be asked to what extent you agree with that statement.
- You will always be given three bullets points to help you construct your answer.

Before writing anything:

- Draw a box around the lines you have been asked to focus on.
- Highlight the key words in the statement.
- Agree with the statement!
- Go through the text, line by line, and highlight anything which supports the statement.

Constructing your answer:

- Give a clear and relevant response to the statement with a reason to support (only do this once at the start of your response)
- Introduce a quotation and embed it in the relevant context.
- Comment on the method used by the writer (language, tone, figurative language, structure, dialogue) and how this is effective.
- Comment on a word or phrase from the quotation and evaluate its impact – what effect does it create?

Example paragraphs:

Firstly, as the ship begins to fill with water, the narrator is described as being 'tossed like a cork to the roof.' The writer's use of a simile here shows how insignificant the narrator is compared with the strength of the in-rushing ocean. Indeed, the verb 'tossed' gives the impression that the narrator was nonchalantly discarded and the comparison with a cork in the ocean shows how powerless he really was.

When the narrator kicks to the surface, he felt like he was 'entering paradise.' This is quickly countered by his feeling that he was 'in hell' due to the cries of the 'souls in torment.' The writer's use of contrast here exacerbates the desperation and helplessness of the situation; as the reader we feel a sense of relief, but this is immediately replaced by a feeling of dread – our emotions are being toyed with constantly. The extreme juxtaposition of 'paradise' – typically an idyllic place, with 'hell' - a place of torture, further adds to the uncertainty of the narrator's situation.

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Every Man for Himself by Beryl Bainbridge

At that moment, the orchestra changed tune and struck up a hymn, one I knew well because it was a favourite of my aunt's and sometimes she used to sing it when she was in one of her brighter moods…*E'en though it be a cross that raiseth me, Still all my song shall be, Nearer my God to Thee, Nearer to Thee.* Hearing it, I knew I had to go in search of Charlie, for Lady Melchett's sake if not for my own, and would have gone searching for him if Scurra hadn't been waiting for me at the bottom of the steps. He said, 'A man bears the weight of his own body without knowing it, but he soon feels the weight of any other object. There is nothing, absolutely nothing that a man cannot forget – but not himself.' Then, before walking away, he said those other things, about it being the drop, not the height, that was terrible, and I left Charlie to God and went back up to the officers' houses.

And now, the moment was almost upon us. The stern began to lift from the water. Guggenheim and his valet played mountaineers, going hand over hand up the rail. The hymn turned ragged; ceased altogether. The musicians scrambled upwards, the spike of the cello scraping the deck. Clinging to the rung of the ladder, I tried to climb to the roof but there was such a sideways slant that I waved like a flag on a pole. I thought I must make a leap for it and turned to look for Hopper. Something, some inner voice urged me to glance below and I saw Scurra again, one arm hooked through the rail to steady himself. I raised my hand in greeting – then the water, first slithering, then tumbling, gushed us apart.

As the ship staggered and tipped, a great volume of water flowed in over the submerged bows and tossed me like a cork to the roof. Hopper was there too. My fingers touched some kind of bolt near the ventilation grille and I grabbed it tight. I filled my lungs with air and fixed my eyes on the blurred horizon, determined to hang on until I was sure I could float free rather than be swilled back and forth in a maelstrom. I wouldn't waste my strength in swimming, not yet, for I knew the ship was now my enemy and if I wasn't vigilant, would drag me with her to the grave. I waited for the next slithering dip and when it came and the waves rushed in and swept me higher, I released my grip and let myself be carried away, over the tangle of ropes and wires and davits, clear of the rails and out into the darkness. I heard the angry roaring of the dying ship, the deafening cacophony as she stood on end and all her guts tore loose. I choked on soot and cringed beneath the sparks, dancing like fire-flies as the forward funnel broke and smashed the sea in two. I thought I saw Hopper's face but one eye was ripped away and he gobbled like a fish on a hook. I was sucked under, as I knew I would be, down, down, and I still waited, waited until the pull slackened – and then I struck out with all my strength.

I don't know how long I swam under that lidded sea – time had stopped with my breath – and just as it seemed as if my lungs would burst, the blackness paled and I kicked to the surface. I had thought I was entering paradise, for I was alive and about to breathe again, and then I heard the cries of souls in torment and believed myself in hell. Dear God! Those voices! Father…Father…For the love of Christ…Help me, for pity's sake!...Where is my son? Some called for their mothers, some on the Lord, some to die quickly, a few to be saved. The lamentations rang through the frosty air and touched the stars; my own mouth opened in a silent howl of grief. The cries went on and on, trembling, lingering – and God forgive me, but I wanted them to end. In all that ghastly night it was the din of dying that chilled the most. Presently the voices grew fainter, ceased – yet I still heard them, as though the drowned called to one another in a ghostly place where no-one could follow. Then silence fell, and that was the worst of all. There was no trace of the *Titanic*. All that remained was a grey veil of vapour drifting above the water.

Q4

Focus this part of your answer on the second half of the source, **from line 19 to the end.**

A student, having read this section of the text said: "The writer really conveys the helplessness and desperation of the narrator's situation."

To what extent do you agree?

In your response, you could:

- write about your own impressions of the narrator and the situation
- evaluate how the writer has created these impressions
- support your opinions with quotations from the text. **[20 marks]**

Stone Cold by Robert Swindells

If you think sleeping rough's just a matter of finding a dry spot where the fuzz won't move you on and getting your head down, you're wrong. Not your fault of course – if you've never tried it you've no way of knowing what it's like, so what I thought I'd do was sort of talk you through a typical night. The night in the Vaudeville alcove won't do because there were two of us and it's worse if you're by yourself.

So you pick your spot. Wherever it is (unless you're in a squat or a derelict house or something) it's going to have a floor of stone, tile, concrete or brick. In other words it's going to be hard and cold. It might be a bit cramped, too – shop doorways often are. And remember, if it's winter you're going to be half frozen before you even start. Anyway you've got your place, and if you're lucky enough to have a sleeping bag, you unroll it and get in.

Settled for the night? Well maybe, maybe not. Remember my first night? The Scouser? 'Course you do. He kicked me out of my bedroom and pinched my watch. Well, that sort of thing can happen any night, and there are worse things. You could be peed on by a drunk or a dog. Happens all the time – one man's bedroom is another man's lavatory. You might be spotted by a gang of lager louts on the look-out for someone to maim. That happens all the time too, and if they get carried away, you can end up dead. There are guys who like young boys, who think because you're a dosser, you'll do anything for dosh, and there's the psycho who'll knife you for your pack.

So, you lie listening. You bet you do. Footsteps. Voices. Breathing, even. Doesn't help you sleep.

Then there's your bruises. What bruises? Try lying on a stone floor for half an hour. Just half an hour. You can choose any position you fancy, and you can change position as often as you like. You won't find it comfy, I can tell you. You won't sleep unless you're dead drunk or zonked on downers. And if you are, and do, you're going to wake up with bruises on hips, shoulders, elbows, ankles and knees – especially if you're a bit thin from not eating properly. And if you do that six hours a night for six nights, you'll feel like you fell out of a train. Try sleeping on concrete then.

And don't forget the cold. If you've ever tried dropping off to sleep with cold feet, even in bed, you'll know it's impossible. You've got to warm up those feet, or lie awake. And in January, in a doorway, in wet trainers, it can be quite a struggle. And if you manage it, chances are you'll need to get up for a pee, and then it starts all over again.

And those are only some of the hassles. I haven't mentioned stomach cramps from hunger, headaches from the flu, toothaches, fleas and lice. I haven't talked about homesickness, depression or despair. I haven't gone into how it feels to want a girlfriend when your circumstances make it virtually impossible for you to get one – how it feels to know you're a social outcast in fact, a non-person to every ordinary everyday activity is closed.

So. You lie on your bruises, listening. Trying to warm your feet. You curl up on your side and your hip hurts, so you stretch out on your back so your feet stay cold and the concrete hurts your heels. You force yourself to lie still for a bit, thinking that it'll help you drop off, but it doesn't. Your pack feels like a rock under your head and your nose is cold. You wonder what time it is. Can you stop listening now, or could someone still come? Distant chimes. You strain your ears, counting. One o'clock? It can't only be one o'clock, surely? I've been here hours. Did I miss a chime?

What's that? Sounds like breathing. Heavy breathing, as in maniac. Lie still. Quiet. Maybe he won't see you. Listen. Is he still there? Silence now. Creeping up, perhaps. No. Relax. Jeez, my feet are cold.

Q4

Focus this part of your answer on the second half of the source, **from line 19 to the end.**

A student, having read this section of the text said: "Link really conveys the desperation and horrors of being homeless."

To what extent do you agree?

In your response, you could:

- write about your own impressions of Link's situation
- evaluate how the writer has created these impressions
- support your opinions with quotations from the text. **[20 marks]**

War Horse by Michael Morpurgo - Chapter 1

My earliest memories are a confusion of hilly fields and dark, damp stables, and rats that scampered along the beams above my head. But I remember well enough the day of the horse sale. The terror of it stayed with me all my life.

I was not yet six months old, a gangling, leggy colt who had never been further than a few feet from his mother. We were parted that day in the terrible hubbub of the auction ring and I was never to see her again. She was a fine working farm horse, getting on in years but with all the strength and stamina of an Irish draught horse quite evident in her fore and hind quarters. She was sold within minutes, and before I could follow her through the gates, she was whisked out of the ring and away. But somehow I was more difficult to dispose of. Perhaps it was the wild look in my eye as I circled the ring in a desperate search for my mother, or perhaps it was that none of the farmers and gypsies there were looking for a spindly-looking half thoroughbred colt. But whatever the reason they were a long time haggling over how little I was worth before I heard the hammer go down and I was driven out through the gates and into a pen outside.

'Not bad for three guineas, is he? Are you, my little firebrand? Not bad at all.' The voice was harsh and thick with drink, and it belonged quite evidently to my owner. I shall not call him my master, for only one man was ever my master. My owner had a rope in his hand and was clambering into the pen followed by three or four of his red-faced friends. Each one carried a rope. They had taken off their hats and jackets and rolled up their sleeves; and they were all laughing as they came towards me. I had as yet been touched by no man and backed away from them until I felt the bars of the pen behind me and could go no further. They seemed to lunge at me all at once, but they were slow and I managed to slip past them and into the middle of the pen where I turned to face them again. They had stopped laughing now. I screamed for my mother and heard her reply echoing in the far distance. It was towards that cry that I bolted, half charging, half jumping the rails so that I caught my off foreleg as I tried to clamber over and was stranded there. I was grabbed roughly by the mane and tail and felt a rope tighten around my neck before I was thrown to the ground and held there with a man sitting it seemed on every part of me. I struggled until I was weak, kicking out violently every time I felt them relax, but they were too many and too strong for me. I felt the halter slip over my head and tighten around my neck and face. 'So you're quite a fighter, are you?' said my owner, tightening the rope and smiling through gritted teeth. 'I like a fighter. But I'll break you one way or the other. Quite the little fighting cock you are, but you'll be eating out of my hand quick as a twick.'

I was dragged along the lanes tied on a short rope to the tailboard of a farm cart so that every twist and turn wrenched at my neck. By the time we reached the farm lane and rumbled over the bridge into the stable yard that was to become my home, I was soaked with exhaustion and the halter had rubbed my face raw. My one consolation as I was hauled into the stables that first evening was the knowledge that I was not alone. The old horse that had been pulling the cart all the way back from market was led into the stable next to mine. As she went in she stopped to look over my door and nickered gently. I was about to venture away from the back of my stable when my new owner brought his crop down on her side with such a vicious blow that I recoiled once again and huddled into the corner against the wall. 'Get in there you old ratbag,' he bellowed. 'Proper nuisance you are Zoey, and I don't want you teaching this young 'un your old tricks.' But in that short moment I had caught a glimpse of kindness and sympathy from that old mare that cooled my panic and soothed my spirit.

Q4 [AO4] Focus this part of your answer on the second half of the source, **from line 19 to the end.**

A teacher, having read this section of the text said: "I like how the writer helps my students to feel involved in this moment. It is as if they are there with the horse."

To what extent do you agree?

In your response, you could:
• write about your own impressions of the horse and the man
• evaluate how the writer has created these impressions
• support your opinions with quotations from the text. **[20 marks]**

Animal Farm by George Orwell - Chapter 9

For the next two days Boxer remained in his stall. The pigs had sent out a large bottle of pink medicine which they had found in the medicine chest in the bathroom, and Clover administered it to Boxer twice a day after meals. In the evenings she lay in his stall and talked to him, while Benjamin kept the flies off him. Boxer professed not to be sorry for what had happened. If he made a good recovery, he might expect to live another three years, and he looked forward to the peaceful days that he would spend in the corner of the big pasture. It would be the first time that he had had leisure to study and improve his mind. He intended, he said, to devote the rest of his life to learning the remaining twenty-two letters of the alphabet.

However, Benjamin and Clover could only be with Boxer after working hours, and it was in the middle of the day when the van came to take him away. The animals were all at work weeding turnips under the supervision of a pig, when they were astonished to see Benjamin come galloping from the direction of the farm buildings, braying at the top of his voice. It was the first time that they had ever seen Benjamin excited--indeed, it was the first time that anyone had ever seen him gallop. "Quick, quick!" he shouted. "Come at once! They're taking Boxer away!" Without waiting for orders from the pig, the animals broke off work and raced back to the farm buildings. Sure enough, there in the yard was a large closed van, drawn by two horses, with lettering on its side and a sly-looking man in a low-crowned bowler hat sitting on the driver's seat. And Boxer's stall was empty.

The animals crowded round the van. "Good-bye, Boxer!" they chorused, "good-bye!"

"Fools! Fools!" shouted Benjamin, prancing round them and stamping the earth with his small hoofs. "Fools! Do you not see what is written on the side of that van?"

That gave the animals pause, and there was a hush. Muriel began to spell out the words. But Benjamin pushed her aside and in the midst of a deadly silence he read:

"'Alfred Simmonds, Horse Slaughterer and Glue Boiler, Willingdon. Dealer in Hides and Bone-Meal. Kennels Supplied.' Do you not understand what that means? They are taking Boxer to the knacker's!"

A cry of horror burst from all the animals. At this moment the man on the box whipped up his horses and the van moved out of the yard at a smart trot. All the animals followed, crying out at the tops of their voices. Clover forced her way to the front. The van began to gather speed. Clover tried to stir her stout limbs to a gallop, and achieved a canter. "Boxer!" she cried. "Boxer! Boxer! Boxer!" And just at this moment, as though he had heard the uproar outside, Boxer's face, with the white stripe down his nose, appeared at the small window at the back of the van.

"Boxer!" cried Clover in a terrible voice. "Boxer! Get out! Get out quickly! They're taking you to your death!"

All the animals took up the cry of "Get out, Boxer, get out!" But the van was already gathering speed and drawing away from them. It was uncertain whether Boxer had understood what Clover had said. But a moment later his face disappeared from the window and there was the sound of a tremendous drumming of hoofs inside the van. He was trying to kick his way out. The time had been when a few kicks from Boxer's hoofs would have smashed the van to matchwood. But alas! his strength had left him; and in a few moments the sound of drumming hoofs grew fainter and died away. In desperation the animals began appealing to the two horses which drew the van to stop. "Comrades, comrades!" they shouted. "Don't take your own brother to his death!" But the stupid brutes, too ignorant to realise what was happening, merely set back their ears and quickened their pace. Boxer's face did not reappear at the window. Too late, someone thought of racing ahead and shutting the five-barred gate; but in another moment the van was through it and rapidly disappearing down the road. Boxer was never seen again.

Q4. [AO4] Focus this part of your answer on the second half of the source, from line 17 to the end.

A teacher having read this text said: "I like how the writer helps my students to feel involved in this moment. It is as if they are at the farm with the animals."

To what extent do you agree?

In your response, you could:

- write about your own impressions of the characters
- evaluate how the writer has created these impressions
- support your opinions with quotations from the text. **[20 marks]**

The War of the Worlds by H G Wells - Chapter 4

The end of the cylinder was being screwed out from within. Nearly two feet of shining screw projected. Somebody blundered against me, and I narrowly missed being pitched onto the top of the screw. I turned, and as I did so the screw must have come out, for the lid of the cylinder fell upon the gravel with a ringing concussion. I stuck my elbow into the person behind me, and turned my head towards the Thing again. For a moment that circular cavity seemed perfectly black. I had the sunset in my eyes.

I think everyone expected to see a man emerge--possibly something a little unlike us terrestrial men, but in all essentials a man. I know I did. But, looking, I presently saw something stirring within the shadow: greyish billowy movements, one above another, and then two luminous disks--like eyes. Then something resembling a little grey snake, about the thickness of a walking stick, coiled up out of the writhing middle, and wriggled in the air towards me--and then another.

A sudden chill came over me. There was a loud shriek from a woman behind. I half turned, keeping my eyes fixed upon the cylinder still, from which other tentacles were now projecting, and began pushing my way back from the edge of the pit. I saw astonishment giving place to horror on the faces of the people about me. I heard inarticulate exclamations on all sides. There was a general movement backwards. I saw the shopman struggling still on the edge of the pit. I found myself alone, and saw the people on the other side of the pit running off, Stent among them. I looked again at the cylinder, and ungovernable terror gripped me. I stood petrified and staring.

A big greyish rounded bulk, the size, perhaps, of a bear, was rising slowly and painfully out of the cylinder. As it bulged up and caught the light, it glistened like wet leather.

Two large dark-coloured eyes were regarding me steadfastly. The mass that framed them, the head of the thing, was rounded, and had, one might say, a face. There was a mouth under the eyes, the lipless brim of which quivered and panted, and dropped saliva. The whole creature heaved and pulsated convulsively. A lank tentacular appendage gripped the edge of the cylinder, another swayed in the air.

Those who have never seen a living Martian can scarcely imagine the strange horror of its appearance. The peculiar V-shaped mouth with its pointed upper lip, the absence of brow ridges, the absence of a chin beneath the wedgelike lower lip, the incessant quivering of this mouth, the Gorgon groups of tentacles, the tumultuous breathing of the lungs in a strange atmosphere, the evident heaviness and painfulness of movement due to the greater gravitational energy of the earth--above all, the extraordinary intensity of the immense eyes--were at once vital, intense, inhuman, crippled and monstrous. There was something fungoid in the oily brown skin, something in the clumsy deliberation of the tedious movements unspeakably nasty. Even at this first encounter, this first glimpse, I was overcome with disgust and dread.

Suddenly the monster vanished. It had toppled over the brim of the cylinder and fallen into the pit, with a thud like the fall of a great mass of leather. I heard it give a peculiar thick cry, and forthwith another of these creatures appeared darkly in the deep shadow of the aperture.

I turned and, running madly, made for the first group of trees, perhaps a hundred yards away; but I ran slantingly and stumbling, for I could not avert my face from these things.

Q4 [AO4 - evaluate with reference]
Focus this part of your answer on the second half of the source, **from line 20 to the end.**
A student, having read this section of the text said: "The writer brings the horror of the creature's appearance to life for the reader. It is as if you are there with the narrator."

To what extent do you agree?
In your response, you should:
• write about your own impressions of the creature
• evaluate how the writer has created these impressions
• support your opinions with quotations from the text. **[20 marks]**

The Lie Tree by Frances Hardinge – The opening

The boat moved with a nauseous, relentless rhythm, like someone chewing on a rotten tooth. The islands just visible through the mist also looked like teeth, Faith decided. Not fine, clean Dover teeth, but jaded, broken teeth, jutting crookedly amid the wash of the choppy grey sea. The mailboat chugged its dogged way through the waves, greasing the sky with smoke.

'Osprey' said Faith through chattering teeth, and pointed.

Her six-year-old brother Howard twisted round, too slow to see the great bird, as its pale body and dark-fringed wings vanished into the mist. Faith winced as he shifted his weight on her lap. At least he had stopped demanding his nursemaid.

'Is that where we are going?' Howard squinted at the ghostly islands ahead.

'Yes, How.' Rain thudded against the thin wooden roof above their heads. The cold wind blew in from the deck, stinging Faith's face.

In spite of the noise around her, Faith was sure that she could hear faint sounds coming from the crate on which she sat. Rasps of movement, breathy slithers of scale on scale. It pained Faith to think of her father's little Chinese snake inside, weak with the cold, coiling and uncoiling itself in panic with every tilt of the deck.

Behind her, raised voices competed with the keening of the gulls and the *phud-phud-phud* of the boat's great paddles. Now that the rain was setting in, everybody on board was squabbling over the small sheltered area towards the stern. There was room for the passengers, but not for all of the trunks. Faith's mother Myrtle was doing her best to claim a large share for her family's luggage, with considerable success.

Sneaking a quick glance over her shoulder. Faith saw Myrtle waving her arms like a conductor while two deckhands moved the Sunderly trunks and crates into place. Today Myrtle was waxen with tiredness and shrouded to the chin with shawls, but as usual she talked through and over everybody else, warm, bland and unabashed, with a pretty woman's faith in others' helpless chivalry.

'Thank you, there, right there - well, I am heartily sorry to hear that, but it cannot be helped - on its side, if you do not mind - well, your case looks very durable to me - I am afraid my husband's papers and projects will not endure the weather so - the Reverend Erasmus Sunderly, the renowned naturalist - how very kind! I am so glad that you do not mind . . .'

Beyond her, round-faced Uncle Miles was napping in his seat, blithely and easily as a puppy on a rug. Faith's gaze slipped past him, to the tall, silent figure beyond. Faith's father in his black priestly coat, his broad-brimmed hat overshadowing his high-brow and hooked nose.

He always filled Faith with awe. Even now he stared out towards the grey horizons with his unyielding basilisk stare, distancing himself from the chilly downpour, the reek of bilge and coal-smoke and the ignominious arguing and jostling. Most weeks she saw more of him in the pulpit than she did in the house, so it was peculiar to look across and see him sitting there. Today she felt a prickle of pained sympathy. He was out of his element, a lion in a rain-lashed sideshow.

On Myrtle s orders, Faith was sitting on the family's largest crate, to stop anybody dragging it out again. Usually she managed to fade into the background, since nobody had attention to spare for a fourteen-year-old girl with wooden features and a mud-brown plait. Now she winced under resentful glares, seared by all the embarrassment that Myrtle never felt.

Myrtle's petite figure was positioned to impede anybody else trying to insert their own luggage under cover. A tall, broad man with a knuckly nose seemed about to push past her with his trunk, but she cut him short by turning to smile.

Myrtle blinked twice, and her big, blue eyes widened, taking on an earnest shine as if she had only just noticed the person before her with clarity. Despite her pink-nipped nose and weary pallor, her smile still managed to be sweet and confiding. 45

'Thank you for being so understanding' she said. There was the tiniest, tired break in her voice.

It was one of Myrtle's tricks for handling men, a little coquetry she summoned as easily and reflexively as opening her fan. Every time it worked, Faith's stomach twisted. It worked now. The gentleman flushed, gave a curt bow and withdrew, but Faith could see he was still carrying his resentment with him. In fact, Faith suspected that her family had antagonised nearly everybody on the boat. 50

Howard shyly adored their mother, and when she was younger, Faith had seen her in the same honeyed light. Myrtle's rare visits to the nursery had been almost unbearably exciting, and Faith had even loved the ritual of being groomed, dressed and fussed over to make her presentable for each encounter. Myrtle had seemed like a being from another world, warm, merry, beautiful and untouchable, a sun-nymph with a keen sense of fashion. 55

Q4

Focus this part of your answer on the second half of the source, **from line 21 to the end.**

A student, having read this section of the text said: "Faith's mum, Myrtle, seems like a woman who gets what she wants – she totally controls everyone around her."

To what extent do you agree?

In your response, you should:

- write about your own impressions of Myrtle
- evaluate how the writer has created these impressions
- support your opinions with quotations from the text. **[20 marks]**

More Than This by Patrick Ness – The prologue

Here is the boy, drowning.

In these last moments, it's not the water that's finally done for him; it's the cold. It has bled all the energy from his body and contracted his muscles into a painful uselessness, no matter how much he fights to keep himself above the surface. He is strong, and young, nearly seventeen, but the wintry waves keep coming, each one seemingly larger than the last. They spin him round, topple him over, force him deeper down and down. Even when he can catch his breath in the few terrified seconds he manages to push his face into the air, he is shaking so badly he can barely get half a lungful before he's under again. It isn't enough, grows less each time, and he feels a terrible yearning in his chest as he aches, fruitlessly, for more.

He is in full panic now. He knows he's drifted just slightly too far from shore to make it back, the icy tide pulling him out farther and farther with every wave, pushing him towards the rocks that make this bit of coast so treacherous. He also knows there is no one who'll notice he's gone in time, no one who'll raise the alarm before the water defeats him. He won't be saved by chance, either. There are no beachcombers or tourists to dive in from the shoreline to save him, not this time of year, not in these freezing temperatures.

It is too late for him. He will die.

And he will die alone.

The sudden, gasping horror of knowing this makes him panic even more. He tries again to break the surface, not daring to think that it might be his last time, not daring to think much at all. He forces his legs to kick, forces his arms to heave himself upward, to at least get his body the right way round, to try and grasp another breath just inches away -

But the current is too strong. It allows him tantalizingly near the surface but spins him upside down before he can get there, dragging him closer to the rocks.

The waves toy with him as he tries again. And fails.

Then, without warning, the game the sea seems to have been playing, the cruel game of keeping him just alive enough to think he might make it, that game seems to be over.

The current surges, slamming him into the killingly hard rocks. His right shoulder blade snaps in two so loudly he can hear the crack, even underwater, even in this rush of tide. The mindless intensity of the pain is so great that he calls out, his mouth instantly filling with freezing, briny sea water. He coughs against it, but only drags more into his lungs. He curves into the pain of his shoulder, blinded by it, paralysed by its intensity. He is unable to even try and swim now, unable to brace himself as the waves turn over once more.

Please is all he thinks. Just the one word, echoing through his head. *Please*.

The current grips him a final time. It rears back as if to throw him, and it dashes him head first into the rocks. He slams into them with the full, furious weight of an angry ocean behind him. He is unable to even raise his hands to try and soften the blow.

The impact is just behind his left ear. It fractures his skull, splintering it into his brain, the force of it also crushing his third and fourth vertebrae, severing both his cerebral artery and his spinal cord, an injury from which there is no return, no recovery. No chance.

He dies.

Q4

Focus this part of your answer on the second half of the source, **from line 18 to the end.**

A student, having read this section of the text said: "The sea is unforgiving and merciless – the boy had absolutely no chance of escaping unharmed."

To what extent do you agree?

In your response, you should:

- write about your own impressions of the sea and the boy's struggles
- evaluate how the writer has created these impressions
- support your opinions with quotations from the text. **[20 marks]**

In Darkness by Nick Lake

Sometime today or another day, I heard people shouting from far, far away in the darkness. It sounded like:

- …survived?
- …alive…in there?
- …wounded?

I shouted back. You can guess what I shouted. I shouted, yes. I shouted, help. I shouted those words in French and English. I shouted in Kreyòl to tell them there was as accident and I was hurt. Then I thought that was a dumb-ass thing to shout, cos this is a hospital, so of course I was hurt, and it must have been anpil obvious there had been an accident, with everything fallen down.

But nobody answered and the voices went away. I don't know when that was. I don't know when it's night and when it's day, or even if night and day exist anymore.

If I can hear people shouting, but they can't hear me, does that make me a ghost? I think, maybe yes. I can't see myself. I can't prove that I exist.

But then I think, no, I can't be a ghost. A ghost does not get thirsty, and as I'm lying here in the broken hospital it's like my mouth is bigger than me, bigger than the darkness. Like my mouth contains the world, not the other way round. It's dry and sore and I can't think of anything else. My thinking, cos of my thirst, is like this:

…WATER, WATER, WATER, WATER, WATER. Am I dead? WATER, WATER, WATER, WATER. What happened? WATER, WATER, WATER, WATER. Is this the end of the world? WATER, WATER, WATER, WATER, WATER, WATER…

That is how my mouth swallows everything else. Maybe my mouth will swallow me, and then this will be over.

I decide to crawl, to measure the space in my prison. I know the rubble and the hand on my left – I don't need to go there again. I don't want to touch that clammy skin. In front of me, and to my right and behind me, is just darkness, though maybe I should stop calling it that cos there's no light at all; it's more blackness. I shift forward on my hands and knees, and I scream when my wrist bends a little and the wound opens. The scream echoes off the concrete all around me.

I shuffle, and I feel like I'm not a person anymore, like I've turned into some animal. I move maybe one body length and then I hit a wall of blocks. I reach up with my hands and stand up, and I feel that it goes up to the ceiling. Only the ceiling is lower than I remember, so that's not great, either. To my right, the same thing – a broken bed, then a wall of rubble. And behind me. I'm in a space maybe one body length in each direction.

I'm in a coffin.

Q4

Focus this part of your answer on the second half of the source, **from line 23 to the end.**

A student, having read this section of the text said: "You can really feel the panic and horror of the situation."

To what extent do you agree?

In your response, you could:

- write about your own impressions of the situation
- evaluate how the writer has created these impressions
- support your opinions with quotations from the text. **[20 marks]**

Aurora by Julie Bertagna

Pandora shouts with all her might to the one who has been everything since he found her as a tiny mud urchin, abandoned in the ruins. No longer that sad and scraggy waif, Pandora has stared at her reflection in the slime pools of the museum and seen a young woman grown tall and lithe and beautiful. Now she is the warrior queen of the netherworld, dressed in the jewelled gowns and armour of lost ages, with a lustrous tangle of hair and green eyes that glow like moonmoths when she looks at Fox.

Soon she and Fox will have so much more than this kingdom of drowned ruins. When war smashes through the city wall, they will leap into the future together and rebuild a world where the sky empire's brutal grip on the flooded Earth is broken at last.

The rain pelts harder and Pandora raises her shield as if to a hail of bullets, imagining herself battling alongside Fox in the coming war. She loves him so endlessly she'd die for him, she vows, as she lunges towards the precarious stairway.

Thunder rips through the world, a sound so immense it might be one of the sky towers tumbling down. Pandora unhooks the little brass bugle she keeps on her belt, waits for the thunder to fade, then blows the hardest blast she can muster.

At last, Fox looks down.

'The boats,' he shouts. 'Pan, come and see!'

Pandora pulls dripping locks of hair from amazed green eyes. The great wall that makes an ocean fortress of the sky city, and traps the netherworld in gloom, is the only horizon she has ever known. She has never seen the boat camp beyond, only imagined it clinging like a crop of barnacles to the other side of the wall.

Over the years she and Fox have listened to the crackling voices on the soundwaves: flood refugees telling desperate stories of their survival on the oceans.

They are her people, thinks Pandora, because her lost family must have been boat refugees. Fox chose his netherworld exile; he fled his home in the sky city above to launch the revolution that will soon shake the world. But how did she come to be here? Pandora has no memory of family or a life beyond the wall.

For now, the boat people cling in wretched anchorage around the Earth's sky cities, barricaded under gun shields, crafting weapons from sea junk for the battle ahead. At least, Pandora hopes so. Their communications with the boat camps died in the mighty winter storms. Searching the hissing desolation of the soundwaves, listening for a pulse-beat of the outside world, Pandora has imagined the boat people all swept away.

Step by trembling step, she now begins to climb up the precarious, twisting stairway towards Fox – who takes a sudden leap across empty space and vanishes through an archway.

Pandora searches the darkness. A tiny parapet encircles the top of the spire. Is that where he went? The wind pounds her, fear drums inside, but she climbs on.

'Here.'

His voice is suddenly close. Sheet lightning turns the sky as bright as the moon and Pandora

glimpses his ghostly figure in an archway, just above. One last heart stopping twist of the stairway…a few more terrifying steps… 40

'Take my hand,' shouts Fox. Rain streams from his outstretched arm. Sweat steams from his skin. If she misjudges the jump, Pandora will follow her lost sword down into the netherworld sea. But she grabs Fox's hand, leaps through the archway – and lands on the narrow parapet at the top of the spire, safe in his grasp. Lightning flickers across their drowned kingdom, illuminating the cathedral that seems to float as an ark in the netherworld sea and the broken bridge that lunges 45 from the water like a lagoon monster, draped in seaweed and barnacled with ancient rust-heaps. All around the old steeple tower and the water-glugged museum, scattered among the massive trunks of the sky towers, lie the last scraps of a city lost to the sea: tiny mudbanked land-scraps, crammed with trees and ruins, teeming with animal life.

Enclosing it all is the vast city wall. 'Look,' urges Fox. Beyond the wall, as far as she can see, is 50 an immense heaving darkness. The world's ocean!

Q4

Focus this part of your answer on the second half of the source, **from line 33 to the end.**
A student, having read this section of the text said: "The writer makes this part of the story tense and exciting."

To what extent do you agree?

In your response, you could:
• write about your own impressions of Pandora and her situation
• evaluate how the writer has created these impressions
• support your opinions with quotations from the text. **[20 marks]**

Past Imperfect by Julian Fellowes

I did know that Damian had done well, though how or why I knew I cannot now remember, for we shared no pals and moved in completely different circles. I must have seen his name on a *Sunday Times* list or maybe in an article on a financial page. But I don't think, before that evening, I understood quite *how* well he had done. We sped through the Surrey lanes and it was soon clear, from the trimmed hedging and the pointed walls, from the lawns like billiard tables and the glistening, weeded gravel, that we had entered the Kingdom of the Rich. Here there were no crumbling gate piers, no empty stables and lodges with leaking roofs. I was witnessing not the memory but the living presence of money.

I do have some experience of it. As a moderately successful writer, one rubs up against what Nanny would call 'all sorts', but I can't pretend this was ever really my crowd. Most of the so-called rich I know are possessed of surviving, not new-born, fortunes, the rich who used to be a good deal richer. But the houses I was passing belonged to the Now Rich, which is different, and for me there is something invigorating in their sense of immediate power. It is peculiar, but even today there is a snobbery in Britain when it comes to the new money. The traditional Right might be expected to turn up their noses at it all I suppose, but paradoxically, it is often the intellectual Left who advertise their disapproval of the self-made. I do not pretend to understand how this is compatible with a belief in equality of opportunity. Perhaps they do not try to synthesise them, but just love by contradictory impulses, which I suppose we all do to some degree. But if I may have been guilty of such unimaginative thinking in my youth, it is gone from me now. These days I unashamedly admire men and women who have made their pile, just as I admire anyone who looks at the future mapped out for them at birth and is not afraid to tear it up and draw a better one. The self-made have more chance than most of finding a life that truly suits. I salute them for it and I salute their bejewelled word. Of course, on a personal level it was extremely annoying that Damian Baxter should be part of it.

The house he had chosen as a setting for his splendour was not a fallen nobleman's palace but rather one of those self-consciously moral, Arts and Crafts, rambling warrens that seem to belong in a Disney cartoon and are no more convincing as a symbol of Olde England than they were when Lutyens built them at the turn of the last century. Surrounding it were gardens, terraced, clipped and criss-crossed with trim and tended paths, but seemingly no land beyond that. Damian had not apparently decided to adopt the ancient model of imitation gentry. This was not a manor house, nestling in the warm embrace of farming acres. This was simply the home of Great Success.

Having said that, while not traditional in an aristocratic sense, the whole thing had quite a 1930s feel, as if it were built with the ill-gotten gains of a **First World War profiteer**. The Agatha Christie element provided by the chauffeur was continued by the bowing butler at the door and even by the housemaid, glimpsed on my way to the pale-oak staircase, in her black dress and frilly apron, although she seemed perhaps more frivolous, as if I had suddenly been transported to the set of a Gershwin musical. A sense of the odd unreality of the adventure was, if anything, confirmed when I was shown to my room without first having met my host. There is always a slight whodunit shiver of danger in this arrangement. A dark-clad servant hovering in the door and muttering 'Please come down to the drawing room when you are ready, Sir,' seems more suited to the reading of a will than a social call. But the room itself was nice enough. It was lined with pale-blue damask, which had also been used to drape the high, four poster bed. The furniture was stable, solid English stuff and a group of **Chinoiserie** paintings on glass, between the windows, was really charming, even if there was the unmistakable tinge of the country house hotel, rather than a real country house, about it all, confirmed by the bathroom, which was sensational, with a huge bath, a walk-in shower, shiny taps on tall pipes coming straight up out of the floor, and enormous towels, fluffy and brand new. As we know, this kind of detail is seldom found in private houses in the shires, even today. I tidied myself up and went downstairs.

The drawing room was predictably cavernous, with a vaulted ceiling and those over-springy carpets that have been too recently replaced. Not the shagpile of the minted club owner, nor the flat and ancient rugs of the posh, but smooth and sprung and *new*. Everything in the room had been purchased within living memory and apparently by a single purchaser. There was none of the ragbag of tastes that country houses are inclined to represent, where the contents of a dozen homes, the amalgamated products of forty amateur collectors over two or three centuries are flung together into a single room. But it was good. In fact, it was excellent, the furniture largely from the early years of the eighteenth century, the pictures rather later, all fine, all shining clean and all in tip-top condition. After the similar experience of my bedroom, I wondered if Damian had employed a buyer, someone whose job was just to put his life together. Either way, there was no very tangible sense of him, or any other personality really, in the room. I wandered about, glancing at the paintings, unsure whether to stand or sit. In truth it felt forlorn, despite its splendour, the burning coals in the grate could not dispel the slightly clammy atmosphere, as if the room has been cleaned but not used for quite a while. And there were no flowers, which I always think a tell-tale sign; there was nothing living, in fact, giving staleness to its perfection, a kind of lifeless sterility. I could not imagine that a woman had played much part in its creation, nor, God knows, that a child had played any part at all.

There was a sound at the door. ‘My dear chap,’ said a voice, still with slight hesitance, the suspicion of a stammer, that I remembered so well. ‘I hope I haven’t kept you waiting.’

Q4

Focus this part of your answer on the second half of the source, **from line 32 to the end.**

A student, having read this section of the text said: “It clearly shows the owner’s desire to be thought of as someone who always had money.”

To what extent do you agree?

In your response, you could:

- write about your own impressions of the house and its owner
- evaluate how the writer has created these impressions
- support your opinions with quotations from the text. **[20 marks]**