

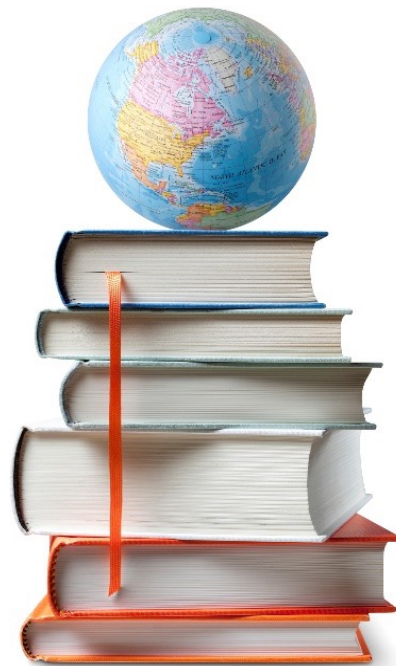


**Cambridge Assessment
International Education**

Example Candidate Responses – Paper 4

**Cambridge International AS & A Level
Literature in English 9695**

For examination from 2021



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Introduction

The main aim of this booklet is to exemplify standards for those teaching Cambridge International AS & A Level Literature in English 9695, and to show how different levels of candidates' performance (high, middle and low) relate to the subject's curriculum and assessment objectives.

In this booklet, candidate responses have been chosen from the June 2021 series to exemplify a range of answers.

For each question, the response is annotated with a clear explanation of where and why marks were awarded or omitted. This is followed by examiner comments on how the answer could have been improved. In this way, it is possible for you to understand what candidates have done to gain their marks and what they could do to improve their answers. There is also a list of common mistakes candidates made in their answers for each question.

This document provides illustrative examples of candidate work with examiner commentary. These help teachers to assess the standard required to achieve marks beyond the guidance of the mark scheme. Therefore, in some circumstances, such as where exact answers are required, there will not be much comment.

The questions and mark schemes used here are available to download from the School Support Hub. These files are:

9695 June 2021 Question Paper 41

9695 June 2021 Mark Scheme 41

Past exam resources and other teaching and learning resources are available on the School Support Hub:

www.cambridgeinternational.org/support

How to use this booklet

This booklet goes through the paper one question at a time, showing you the high-, middle- and low-level response for each question. The candidate answers are set in a table. In the left-hand column are the candidate answers, and in the right-hand column are the examiner comments.

Example Candidate Response – low		Examiner comments
7	a	
		1 The answer opens with a very brief introduction that acknowledges the question.
1		2 Basic points are made in relation to Gilead.
2		3 This point is supported and straightforward. It could be improved through development and commentary on the situation rather than stating what happens and what is said.
3		

Answers are by real candidates in exam conditions. These show you the types of answers for each level. Discuss and analyse the answers with your learners in the classroom to improve their skills.

Examiner comments are alongside the answers. These explain where and why marks were awarded. This helps you to interpret the standard of Cambridge exams so you can help your learners to refine their exam technique.

How the candidate could have improved their answer

- The candidate could have improved their answer by taking a more strategic approach to developing a supported and focused argument.
- The candidate could have developed points in more detail, expanding on ideas through regular use of supporting detail and textual reference, including quotations.
- The candidate could have used planning time to explore structure with progression of ideas through linked paragraphs. The candidate could have used points from the story to make arguments.

This section explains how the candidate could have improved each answer. This helps you to interpret the standard of Cambridge exams and helps your learners to refine their exam technique.

Common mistakes candidates made in this question

- Lack or loss of focus on the question. This sometimes related to misunderstanding of the question.
- Inconsistent or undeveloped use of specific details, episodes or quotations from the novel to illustrate points made.
- Insecure or lack of analysis, particularly in terms of structure and form.
- Approaches to personal response and/or varying opinions.
- Unstructured answers.

Often candidates were not awarded marks because they misread or misinterpreted the questions.

Lists the common mistakes candidates made in answering each question. This will help your learners to avoid these mistakes and give them the best chance of achieving the available marks.

Question 4(b)

Example Candidate Response – high

Examiner comments

4	b	<p>From the poem "It was not death, for I stood up" Dickinson utilises features typical of her poetic style. Her use of dashes are typical of her poetry and create a sense of isolation while her use of capitalisation of words where it is unnecessary highlight aspects that are important in the poem. The poem follows the typical Dickinson form of iambic pentameter and trimeter as well as quatrains for line structure. The repetition is common feature of Dickinson and here in the use of "And" may suggest fragmented and disjointed thoughts to perhaps suggest confusion. The use of alliteration may be used to link related words together in the poem such as "Night... Noon", similar to other poems such as "Because I could not stop for Death" in Dickinson's use of "Cease... Labor". The theme of death is most present with reference to "Death" has as well as use of "Autumn".</p> <p>We can see Dickinson's use of dashes and capitalisation present within the poem. In "It was not death" the dashes could be used to suggest confusion confusion through the effect of fragmented thoughts as dashes also act as a pause thereby creating an effect of disjointed disjointedness. Another aspect to consider with dashes is that they create shorter utterances, which can suggest fear which is a typical emotion associated with death. The use of dashes have been used to create many different effects. For example, in "Wild Nights" Dickinson's use of dashes were used to create the effect of short breaths to suggest the symptoms of love and arousal given that it was a love poem. The use of capitalisation is common in poems of Dickinson and are used to give importance to words such as "Midnight" to emphasize that it is very associated with death as it is included in a poem with the theme of death. It has been used in other poems such as "I heard a ^{Fly} buzz-when I died" where the is "Fly"</p>
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- 1 The candidate considers the detail in the question with reference to examples that are brought up later in the answer. This is a poised and well-focused introduction.
- 2 The detail and reference to points of technical relevance are developed and include reference to other works by Dickinson. These are well chosen in light of the question.
- 3 This paragraph builds on points that were introduced in the opening paragraph.
- 4 The use of 'could' suggests that the candidate is aware of other interpretations and considers them in their analysis.
- 5 The candidate considers the effect on the reader of the technique, demonstrating perceptive engagement with the text.
- 6 Valid and timely reference is made to another poem in the selection. This candidate is demonstrating a deep and comprehensive knowledge and understanding.
- 7 Further embedded analysis and consideration of the detail of this poem ('Midnight') and other poems in the selection.

Example Candidate Response – high, continued

Examiner comments

is capitalised to signify its importance in the poem as a 'memento mori' as well as to emphasise how the extraordinary can be found in the ordinary, as a sign, often regarded as insignificant, ~~emphas~~ suggests to the audience ideas of death and decay, making it powerful.

8 This is a valid argument but could be improved by a clearer and more developed explanation of the 'extraordinary in the ordinary' point. Working at this level, the candidate could also improve by more accurate genre reference – use of 'reader' rather than 'audience'.

The form of the poem is very typical of Dickinson, as it uses quatrains and iambic tetrameter and trimeter. The inclusion of tetrameter and trimeter may be used to appear similar to conversation, thus creating pity in the theme of death, as there is only "death. The lack of rhyme scheme in the poem suggests that this is a more serious poem as well as more bleak, as opposed to "the mushroom is the elf of plains" which with a theme of nature is more light in tone and therefore follows Dickinson's typical ABCB rhyme scheme.

9 Focused analysis of poetic features continues with integration of detail and development of ideas.

Dickinson's use of alliteration is very present in this poem with the repetition of /d/ perhaps replicating the sound of heartbeats, which reinforces the theme of death. The repetition of /f/ as well as /s/ perhaps reflects the sound of wind or the cold, with the wind perhaps ~~the~~ suggesting the natural cycle of life, ending in death while the cold being used perhaps as aspects of the cold cure associated with death and lack of life, shown in the season of winter. Alliteration may also simply be used to link ideas

10 This answer could be improved by rephrasing the opening of the first sentence ('very present' is unspecific) but the point goes on to be discriminating and effective.

in the poem such as "frost" and "flesh", linking both to ideas around death, as seen in other poems where items of the same semantic field such as "labour... leisure" both involving life.

11 This is a perceptive and well-phrased point.

The ordinary becoming the extraordinary is an aspect of many of Dickinson's works, including "it was not death"

12 The argument develops effectively through progression of ideas.

Example Candidate Response – high, continued	Examiner comments
<p>13 as it is revealed that a speaker has already died ^{as} the shown in the line "Burial, Reminded me of mine" which subverts the audience's expectations as the rest of the poem comes from the perspective of someone who is dead, or which allows Dickinson to create insightful descriptions of existence such as "space stares all around" which the use of "stares" suggests a vulnerability and transparency after death. The subverting of expectation is common with Dickinson, as seen with her description of "death" as "kindly" in "Because I could not stop for death" which subverts the perception of death as something to fear. ^{arises} Irrational fear arises from what we do not understand" (Seib)</p> <p>14</p> <p>15 In conclusion, Dickinson's methods in "It was not death..." are typical of her writing style with the inclusion of common features such as dashes, alliteration, capitalisation and ballad form, as shown by her other poems within her anthology.</p>	<p>13 The lexically dense style here is effective and enables sophisticated analysis and development. Personal response is woven expertly into the arguments.</p> <p>14 Detail is integrated with a sense of perceptive selection and sensitive engagement.</p> <p>15 The concluding evaluation supports and consolidates earlier assured arguments.</p> <p>Total mark awarded = 23 out of 25</p>

How the candidate could have improved their answer

- The candidate could have improved their answer by ensuring consistency of critical style; fluency of argument would help the candidate to articulate increasingly perceptive and lucid arguments. This could include sophisticated use of critical vocabulary such as referring to readership for a poem rather than audience.
- The candidate could improve by referring to the reader's expectations rather than the audience's expectations. This demonstrates an understanding of genre and form.

Example Candidate Response – middle

Examiner comments

4 b) The poem "It was not Death, for I stood up" identifies the speaker's struggle to understand her state of being. The poem introduces the theme of death as well as identity crisis through the use of personification, metaphors and alliteration metaphors to emphasize their deception.

Dickinson begins the poem with the speaker acknowledging she isn't dead. In the quotation, "for I stood up, And all the Dead, lie down-" the speaker compares herself to the dead by stating the obvious that she is alive as she's standing. Nevertheless, the fact the speaker makes a comparison could suggest that metaphorically she's dead inside. The use of the dashes here, and throughout the poem, reinforce her the doubt and self-questioning from the feeling of emptiness. This poem can be linked to another one of Dickinson's pieces, "I felt a funeral in my brain", where the speaker assumes that the speaker is physically dead but mentally alive. Both poems show a similarity in the sense that both speakers question their current state of mind and their body.

Furthermore, the poem includes personification to enhance the feeling of being ^{emptiness} lost in one's own body. The speaker states that "I felt Siroccos - crawl-" which insinuates that their senses are still intact. The "Siroccos" are hot winds coming from the African region which contrast with the coolness on "my Marble feet". A typical method of Dickinson is to contrast ^{natural} made with nature which reinforces the fact the speaker is alive as he or she is surrounded by the daily aspects of life, whether they are natural or made from humans. The use of wind

- 1 The introduction is concise and presents initial ideas about the question and poem. Analytical direction is established briefly.
- 2 The candidate identifies with the voice in the poem and clearly expresses a secure interpretation.
- 3 This point is well expressed and includes reference to a personal view as well as attempting to relate to varying ideas and opinions. This point could be improved through development and explanation of the 'dead inside' reference.
- 4 This is a competent point of analysis.
- 5 The candidate makes a reference to another poem by Dickinson and uses this to reinforce their point.
- 6 Analysis is sound and well-supported by a quotation. The candidate goes on to develop this point about physical sensation by referring to 'my marble feet' and this point is used to exemplify a feature of Dickinson's style.
- 7 The candidate links arguments to further ideas about Dickinson's style. This suggests knowledge and understanding of literary context. This is well linked to the question.

Example Candidate Response – middle, continued

Examiner comments

8 in Dickinson's poems is recurring. One of her most known poems is "The wind tapped, like a tired man". The contrast of these two poems ^{shows that} is in "the wind tapped, like a tired man", Dickinson writes about the ghostly presence of the wind, whilst in this poem the ghostly presence is within the speaker, and the sense of isolation. If we link the conventional of this poem to Dickinson herself, we may see this as an autobiography of her mental and physical illness after the loss of her parents and nephew leading to her becoming less passionate about her poems and therefore struggling to identify what's left of her; ^{this} is an accurate reflection of the speaker in the poem, ^{overwhelmed} ~~concerned~~ with their identity crisis. 10

11 Although in addition, although the speaker is aware that they're alive, in the ~~third~~ fourth stanza they reinforce the feeling of death within them. In the quotation "as if my life were shaven, and fitted to a frame" the speaker embeds the connotation of death through the ~~possible~~ reference of a coffin. This insinuates the feeling of suffocation and possible lack of freedom. From a feminist perspective this can be clearly linked to the patriarchal society women of the eighteenth-hundreds were trapped in. Many women, like Dickinson, lived in a chauvinistic world where men's power ~~was~~ ^{were} enshrined and women ^{had} minuscule amounts of choice or freedom of speech. The use of anaphora in the fourth stanza ^{with} ~~the~~ the word "and" reiterates the speaker's escapation as they "could not breathe without a key", ultimately indicating the key ~~is~~ represents

13

8 The candidate provides an example related to Dickinson's use of the wind in another poem.

9 The candidate continues to make an argument that is competent and demonstrates insight. The link to Dickinson's own life is made and partially explained. This could be improved by articulating the link more specifically.

10 A personal interpretation of the poem is linked to the autobiographical point. This could be improved by supporting the point about the speaker's 'identity crisis' with a quotation to root it in the text.

11 The argument progresses with relevance, selecting a quotation from the text to support it. This is developed effectively.

12 The candidate refers to a feminist perspective, competently considering another interpretation. It is linked with relevance to a contextual reference about Dickinson's life.

13 This is a competent analytical point with use of integrated quotation to support. The candidate offers a brief explanation. This could be improved with further development linked to the question.

Example Candidate Response – middle, continued

Examiner comments

	<p>the answer the speaker is looking for to be set free from their numbness.</p>
14	<p>However, the speaker's desperation ends in deception in the final stanza. The use of the dashes could represent the speaker's progression in the loss of hope, which is reinforced by the use of a slant rhyme in the words "span" and "Despair". This is a characteristic method of Dickinson as here she reflects on the fact that the poem doesn't come to a full resolution, leaving the readers with a sense of dissatisfaction. The final two lines, where there's no "Report of Land - To justify - Despair" enhances ^{the} hopeless tone as it mirrors a boat lost at sea, consumed by their isolation with nowhere to go.</p>
15	<p>To conclude, Dickinson presents emotionally moving poems through her metaphorical writing which enhances the readers feeling of isolation and desperation for an answer. The readers could acknowledge that the speaker's current state is submerged in the ^{only} feeling of existing, but not feeling alive.</p>

14 Analysis continues through progression of ideas as the candidate works through the detail of the poem. An aspect of technical detail – rhyme – is used to illustrate how Dickinson's poem reaches conclusion. Use of quotation is sound.

15 The conclusion reflects personal engagement and a sound attempt to draw together the threads of argument used in the answer to this point. This could be improved by making closer reference to the question.

Total mark awarded = 17 out of 25

How the candidate could have improved their answer

- The candidate could have improved their answer by explaining comments and points of analysis in more detail.
- They could have also developed the depth and extent of their interpretations which could have pushed the answer further towards the thorough and confident qualities of a Level 5 answer.
- The candidate could have articulated points about the poet's life and times in closer association with the terms of the question. Arguments related to context and personal interpretation should be firmly rooted in text via quotation and/or textual reference. Whilst the candidate did this at some points in the answer, a consistent approach throughout would have improved the overall outcome.

Example Candidate Response – low

Examiner comments

4. (b) Emily Dickinson uses different methods and techniques in her writings to portray her major concerns to the audience like the power of nature and death.

In the first stanza, Emily Dickinson portrays a caesura in the phrase 'And all the Dead, lie down-'. This implies that all who are dead might be dead forever as suggested by the endless hyphen. This clears up an understanding of the title to the readers, that that as the dead lie down, it therefore 'It was not Death, for I stood up'. This technique conjures up a spooky atmosphere for the readers.

Additionally, in the third verse of the first stanza, Emily Dickinson presents an enjambment of a phrase that is continued to the fourth verse and it states, 'for all the Bells Put out their Tongues,'. This suggests that the concept of death can not be looked at from just one perspective which is represented by the continuation of the same sentence to another verse. This shows the readers how death is a vaguely understood and perspective full concept and that no one truly understands it fully. This intensifies the spooky atmosphere to the readers.

Moreover, in the third verse of the first stanza, Emily Dickinson presents personification

- 1 The candidate introduces their answer with a simple paragraph. The answer could be improved by introducing a key argument or strategic direction to the opening.
- 2 The selection of caesura as a technique for comment is relevant and valid. It is straightforward but is well linked to the point about the title of the poem.
- 3 This paragraph could be improved by a more critically and fluently expressed end line. 'Spooky' is somewhat colloquial and unspecific in the context of an academic essay.
- 4 This paragraph offers some straightforward knowledge and understanding with supporting detail included.
- 5 This statement about the 'spooky atmosphere' is repeating the end of the paragraph above and does not reflect insight or specific comment. As earlier, the colloquial, 'spooky' is not appropriate expression.

Example Candidate Response – low, continued

Examiner comments

in the sentence 'for all the Bells Put out their Tongues,'. This personification tries to imply that the bells rang out for noun almost in a humanly form and so relates to humans on a higher intellectual level. What is brought to mind for the audience is that the little things in life like the ringing of a bell can have deeper meanings in life that people need to acknowledge and enjoy before death.

This conjures up an analytical atmosphere to the reader.

Plus,
The third verse of the second stanza reveals a metaphor in the phrase 'for just my Marble feet Could keep a Chancel, cool-'. This metaphor brings out a suggestion that after death one can not feel anything including fire, and so Emily Dickinson portrays it using the metaphor in 'Marble feet'. This shows the readers the vagueness of death and how it represents a void or empty being empty.

Additionally, in the fourth stanza, Emily Dickinson brings out repetition of the word 'And' in the second, third and fourth verses. This repetition actively repetition actively suggests that death can be describe in many ways. This shows the audience how death is a concept that has different understandings.

- 6 Straightforward understanding and analysis are presented with a developing argument.
- 7 A personal or opinion point is attempted but not realised effectively. There is some link to the question, but the point would benefit from specific development and support.
- 8 'analytical atmosphere' is unclear.
- 9 Analysis continues in a straightforward manner with some personal engagement and appropriately selected support.
- 10 This is a tenuous point with an attempt at understanding but a shoehorned link to the question. The last line of this paragraph is nebulous, and the candidate could improve by making an incisive point about the use of repeated language and how it relates to the question.

Example Candidate Response – low, continued

Examiner comments

11	This intensifies the analytical atmosphere brought up by Emily Dickinson to the audience.
12	Moreover, the thematic Thematic concerns portrayed + in the poem seem to be the power of death. This is because the poem contains the events that people understand to occur after death and how death affects the victims. It is clear that death is one of Emily Dickinson's major concerns portrayed in many poems.
13	The poem contains six stanzas that all have four verses. The versification in the poem seems to be irregular as some lines are long and others are short. The rhyme scheme in the poem also looks to be irregular. There appears to be no rhyme scheme in the presented poem.
14	Conclusively, Emily Dickinson's poem 'It was not Death, for I stood up', adds to my understanding of the techniques and concerns she use uses in her writings, that help to bring out her major ideas like the power of nature and death.

11 The answer could be improved by editing or removing this comment which detracts from more coherent and specific arguments earlier in the answer. In its current form, it is not clear.

12 The candidate is trying to make a relevant point but because this is not rooted in textual evidence or part of an argument, results in circling of the question without clear direction. Improvement could be made if the candidate were to use a link to the detail of the poem.

13 The candidate comments on the structure of the poem but does not link this to an effect or to the question itself. Links to these aspects would improve the answer.

14 The candidate returns to the question, but the paragraph is effectively a repetition of the introduction. This would be improved if the candidate used the progression of their argument to present a summative point relating to the question.

Total mark awarded = 10 out of 25

How the candidate could have improved their answer

- The candidate could have improved their answer by ensuring all points were specific and related purposefully to a line of argument. Whilst the candidate attempted to analyse and respond personally, some points lack clarity and development.
- The candidate did not refer to other poems by Dickinson in their answer and therefore the part of the question that refers to 'elsewhere in the selection' is not met. The answer could be improved by reference to examples from some of Dickinson's other poems in the selection.
- Some of the arguments in the answer are general and colloquial phrasing sometimes compromises clarity and critical style.
- A strategic approach to the answer would support the candidate in writing arguments that offer progression, rather than repeating or circling ideas.

Common mistakes candidates made in this question

- Making comments about aspects of context that were not linked to the question.
- Not referring to poems 'elsewhere in the selection' or referring to them too much to the detriment of attention given to the printed poem on the paper.
- Lack of development of analysis or support of points related to the question.
- Making accurate comments about features such as rhyme and imagery, but not relating these to effects on readers.
- Lack of confidence and security in making personal arguments about the poems.

Question 7(a)

Example Candidate Response – high

Examiner comments

7	a	<p>Margaret Atwood's "The Handmaid's Tale" is a revolutionary revolutionary work of speculative fiction. The author paints a dreadful dystopia in which women are merely viewed as "ambulatory dialyses", stripped of their identity and forced to submit to to the totalitarian regime that is Gilead. At the surface of it the quotation "from each according to her ability; to each according to his needs" may be seen as a valid explanation for the practices employed by Gilead in order to promote the decreasing "Caucasian birthrate", however in reality it reveals a much more profound truth.</p> <p>To begin with, the phrase was first presented to the then trainee Handmaid by Aunt Lydia, who ^{dogmatically} stated that it was taken from St Paul's "Acts". In actuality, the phrase is a perversion of a quote from Karl Marx's "Communist manifesto", however ^{altering} altered the previously unisex tone by gendering the phrase in order to fit Gilead's misogynistic agenda. An additional layer of depth is added to its significance when considering the historical context at the time the book was being written. Living in 1980s Berlin, Atwood found herself at the centre of the Cold War conflict, with ^{the} capitalist west ideologies from the West and Soviet Communist influences from the East. Arguably, the phrase can be viewed as a criticism of the authoritarian Soviet Union as some of its practices are manifested in Gilead, after all the novelist made a rule for herself to only use events that have already happened in the past. For instance, "black van" disappearances were frequent in stare Stalinist times, during which unwanted members of society, similar to the "unwomen" of Gilead, were taken to uninhabitable</p>
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1 The opening combines a freshly personal engagement with references to the novel's genre and a sense of the question. It is both confident and focused.

2 The candidate deals with the question and deploys a critical and articulate style which is clear and suggests a relevant direction.

3 The answer goes into detail about the origins of the quotation, demonstrating assured knowledge. Points are discriminating and specific, for example, 'gendering the phrase'.

4 There is seamless use of contextual detail to support relevant argument which is linked effectively to a view of Atwood's own documented views. The candidate shows sensitive, integrated awareness of varying opinions.

5 Relevant use of textual detail, showing perceptive understanding of the text and demands of the question.

Example Candidate Response – high, continued

Examiner comments

areas to labour, or depending on the severity of their crime, executed. These practices are also present in Atwood's theocracy as "unwomen" are sent to the Colonies to "clean up toxic waste", slowly disintegrating towards their death. Another proposition by the Gileadean commanders is to hang such people on "The Wall", for every one to see their ~~red-tinted~~ blood, compared to Serena Joy's red lips. Overall, the presentation of Serena's garden as "peaceful from afar" is reminiscent of the general state of Gilead that pretends to look organised to the outside world, telling ^{the curious} Japanese tourists that the Handmaids are, indeed, "happy", while just like in Serena's garden there is sadness and deception. The inner disorder of the "garden" is characterized by the Commander's secret "scrabble" game dates with Offred and the affair with Nick that was encouraged by Serena ~~to~~ herself.

~~The phrase~~

"From each according to her ability, to each according to his need" was presented as a religious text, ironic to the ~~secular~~ secular nature of the aspiring-to-be-Communist Soviet Union. This reveals another significant characteristic of the novel, and that is the regime's use of the Old Testament as justification for its atrocious practices. The Bible becomes an "incendiary device" as beatings of the Handmaids' feet and hands are approved as an acceptable punishment for whenever they misbehave according to the rules, since those body parts are not essential for the fulfilment of their "biological destiny". Critic Manik Matak suggests that despite Gilead's supposed adherence to religious values, it "lacks spirituality" of any kind. Biblical texts

6 Effective and assured use of knowledge, including selection of relevant detail.

7 Perceptive analysis is evident here through the use of comparison and development of supported discussion.

8 This is focused analysis, but the candidate loses fluency and clarity a little here. The point could be improved if it were clearer.

9 Perceptive understanding and analysis are related back to the question fluently and with development of personal view through the adjective 'atrocious' used with 'practices'.

10 Sophisticated choice of reference relating to varying interpretation. The candidate embeds quotation effectively, achieving a successful critical style.

Example Candidate Response – high, continued

Examiner comments

	such as that of Rachel and Leah are taken at their word, as the sentiment of "Give me children, or else I die" becomes more valued than the Handmaids' identities and freedom of choice.	11
12	Atwood makes several allusions to women's lives and being being reduced to mere "two-legged water wombs" in order to satisfy the male Commander's needs. The Handmaids' heads are "severed" by a sheet during their mandatory gynaecologist visits, suggesting the indifference towards what they think or have to say, as long as they are "fruitful". How The discussion of women's reproductive rights is further alluded to in the novel's historical notes, in which a Professor	
13	is called "Professor Wade", perhaps a reference to the infamous Texan senator who fought against abortion rights. Despite that, the author also puts into question what are the "needs", since the Commander is seen being offered for his own sexual pleasure outside of the state prescribed "Ceremony".	
14	This further highlights the idea that Gilead's real intentions are far from pure and, as noted by critic Simmons, the "biblical allusions" used to justify their practices end up being quite "grotesque".	
15	In one of her numerous interviews At Margaret Atwood has stated that "Political disagreement is political disagreement with a theology is heresy". This view can be applied to the anyone who might attempt to disagree with the quotation at hand, since they would be battling against the very core of the regime. Similarly to the "unpeople" in George Orwell's 1984, that Atwood has cited as her primary influence, in order for one to not become an un "unwoman" one must comply with the the , as revealed,	
16	untruthful and perverted dogma of an authoritative regime like Gilead. As a result, the novelist has successfully utilized this quotation in her attempt to warn the readers of such the possibility of such an outcome.	17

11 Progression of the argument is confident and well-referenced here.

12 A combination of relevant knowledge, supporting detail and personal argument contributes to a comprehensive analysis with useful links to other aspects of the text.

13 The use of 'perhaps' as a modifier enhances this comment, reflecting sensitivity to other interpretations whilst also commenting on an aspect of context.

14 Further references to alternative views are included to develop the argument effectively.

15 Relevant literary context is used in the reference to Orwell and is well linked to the question and previous arguments made.

16 There is a return to the question at the end in a concise conclusion that neatly ties the argument together.

17 Overall, this is a very strong response that covers the assessment objectives comprehensively and with perception.

Total mark awarded =
24 out of 25

How the candidate could have improved their answer

- The answer could be improved by development of some aspects of the analysis of detail from the text, including some reference to sophisticated elements of subject specific language.
- The candidate could also have improved by ensuring consistency of critical style and fluency of some aspects of expression, such as on the second page of the answer.

Example Candidate Response – middle

Examiner comments

SECTION 13

7 a) In the novel, "The Handmaid's Tale", the story of a handmaid is being told through the eyes of Offred, someone who had to suffer through the transition of the US to Gilead, a totalitarian state. In ~~the novel~~, light of the quotation, therefore, I will continue on to discuss some of the ways in which it is ^{made} significant by Atwood in this work of literature.

Having been influenced strongly from the Puritanist movements in New England during the era of colonialism, it is no wonder that the story is implied to be set in Cambridge, specifically around the University of Harvard.

The author mentions in her commentary on her work about how her dystopia hadn't been completely fiction - just it was closely based on situations ~~she~~ that had happened in the past. The repression of women is central, I believe, to the novel and one can see this enacted through the ways that women had to become "worthy vessels", the word 'vessel' being present in the Bible, for a means of saying that women were created for childbirth. This is perhaps where I believe the part of the quotation "from each according to her ability" resonates with most of the 'ability' implies childbirth. The mention of the feminine ~~possessive~~ "her" indicates the ability that solely relies on women. As I see it, albeit being ~~physically true~~ biologically true, one cannot deny the ~~secret~~ way that this is fulfilled by "to... his needs", signifying that women ~~are~~ should make use of their ability to satisfy the needs of men. One ^{ironic} critic that is perhaps worth mentioning is Simone de Beauvoir that ~~commented~~ commented on how society treats women as the "second sex", as being inferior for their ~~abilities~~ ^{abilities}.

In the novel, Offred makes the remark that she ~~refuses~~

- 1 The focus is on the question and relates to relevant knowledge about the novel.
- 2 The answer starts to drift from relevance here as the comment is not linked closely to the terms of the question. While offering contextual knowledge that is secure, it is most effective when part of the argument.
- 3 The candidate goes on to make a point relating to the author's views which fulfils 'O' criteria. However, this is not linked clearly to the question.
- 4 The candidate makes a comment on their own personal view, using 'I believe' to convey this. The answer here moves back towards being more relevant and quotations are secure and integrated.
- 5 The candidate builds their argument through an additional personal point and refers back to the question.
- 6 The candidate makes a confident personal response to further the argument and breaks down aspects of the question to convey a more complex point about the needs of men.
- 7 A valid point is made about other opinions. This could be improved by more specific development of the point, e.g. by providing an example of de Beauvoir's views.

Example Candidate Response – middle, continued

Examiner comments

8 look^{down} at something that defines (her) to completely "dirt" the bath before the ceremony. In her eyes, ~~her~~ her body is now a "cloud of jelly" that serves the patriarchal regime and through refusing to look at it ^{but rather because it represents her state} ~~not~~ because she is ashamed of her nudity, ~~her~~ her character shows ~~her~~ rejection of the society and belief system. The word 'completely' is also noteworthy as it is once again, symbolizes the truth that in the reality from which she desperately tries to escape, her body is her 'ability' that gives her a huge change.

9 To continue, therefore, in my perspective, up till this moment, ~~the~~ Atwood makes this quotation significant as she emphasizes how ~~to~~ ~~is~~ ~~in~~ Gilead, the ability of childbearing is what outlives the needs of a patriarchal state in most of infidelity.

10 To continue, another way that one can look at this quote is by focusing on the knowledge and education of society in regards to men and women. 'Ability' could also besides connotations of childbearing, involve thoughts of educational ability.

11 In Gilead, reading was completely prohibited and for women. Even ~~going~~ ~~to~~ the markets, called simply "Milk and Honey," had pictures instead of words to ~~prevent~~ "guard them" of the temptation. Reading was considered a crime in Gilead for women, and in my view, this can be linked to the beliefs of Mary Wollstonecraft who believed that women's incapacities in the public sphere weren't innate, ~~it~~ rather, a consequence of having a limited education.

12 I believe the state of Gilead had made use of this knowledge and ~~to~~ ~~control~~ ~~the~~ ~~minds~~ ~~of~~ ~~women~~, consequently giving them control over their bodies as well. This belief can be linked to the comment as if women's 'abilities' are greatly limited, men in this

- 8 The candidate shows understanding here with progression of ideas and secure use of textual reference.
- 9 Analysis is thorough here with supported reference to symbolism.
- 10 The candidate deals well with detail here.
- 11 The candidate addresses the question with continued progression of clear argument.
- 12 There is thorough understanding here with good use of supporting detail.
- 13 The context link to Wollstonecraft is valid here, reflecting a sound appreciation. The candidate could improve by developing this point in more detail, perhaps linking consequences of limited education to a specific episode in the novel.
- 14 This comment edges towards assertion and the candidate could have improved this by linking to a specific episode in the novel.

Example Candidate Response – middle, continued

Examiner comments

	<p>society can set more easily upon their 'needs' be it sex, political power or overall domination. The sexual needs of men in this novel are exercised when looked at from a long</p>
15	<p>that now underlines how the Ceremony is actually a form of rape and not a means of sustaining humanity. The interplay between sex, politics and power ^{religion} is of great significance in this novel as it shows how in a society where women are oppressed to such an extent, the level of theocracy plays an important role in justifying the of sexism and rape.</p>
16	<p>Lastly, one can also comment on how this quotation is made significant in relation to the the freedom of women. This quote reminds me personally of Aunt Lydia's remark that women were protected "in theocracy had freedom to, but now [they] have the freedom from". In this quote, one can notice how parts of society believed that this totalitarian state gave them freedom from being raped and sexualised, or catcalled as Offred remembers in her memory of the Old World. Yet, if looked at</p>
17	<p>thoroughly, this remark is ironic as nothing has changed but the rape and disrespect are now normal and forced. Children in this society are, in effect, forced a consequence of being given the freedom of not having a child - the exact opposite. This also can be seen taking on the shape of emotional trauma. The novel, in structure, seems to</p>
18	<p>drift from reality to flashbacks and in a complicated, hazy manner and in many instances the reader cannot differentiate whether the main narrator is telling the truth. In her explicit femininity, Offred seems to narrate in a rather, enervated manner during her flashbacks</p>
19	<p>in the 'Night' chapters. This in my opinion, shows how Gilead has forcefully broken women's 'ability' to think and reminisce to satisfy the needs of a an state with full patriarchal control. This may, by breaking</p>

15 Whilst this has the basis of a valid point, the candidate could improve by linking it to a specific detail and/or quotation from the text. Ideas are progressing but tangible, specific examples would be very supportive.

16 The candidate returns to the question and uses knowledge of character (Aunt Lydia) to develop a successful point.

17 The argument would be improved here by clearer explanation of why the remark is ironic. There is a partial explanation, but this point is not fully secure in its current form.

18 The analysis of structure is a good direction for the candidate to choose but this point could be improved by a more specific focus. The essential point made is competent but could be executed with more discriminating focus.

19 This link to a personal view is effective and relates to the earlier analysis.

Example Candidate Response – middle, continued

Examiner comments

women's memories, as presented through the form of the novel, I believe Atwood shared how the needs of men were marginalized and forced to create the "transitional generation," which would fit women hundreds of years back. The puzzle of memories, in a way, remind us of Freud's works that state that our subconscious comes alive during our dreams and this is seen evidently during Offred's dreams such as her daughter or the bang of the ~~door~~ p-pornographic magazines. Therefore, through strong such ~~is~~ breakdown of the subconscious of female characters on the novel, Atwood presents how the needs of men shapes the ability of women in Gilead.

To conclude, in "The Handmaid's Tale," women are hit through horrific circumstances, that surprisingly resemble ~~is~~ closely our recent history. I believe in light of this comment, the ~~text~~ emphasizes how in a patriarchal state, women are judged based on ability and men based on their needs, both of which are adapted accordingly through ~~the~~ corruption and utilization of politics, religion and sci.

20 Analysis is confident here with a relevant link to Freud and the subconscious.

21 This point demonstrates thorough knowledge and understanding of the text and is linked well to the point about the subconscious.

22 The concluding paragraph is purposeful and relates to points made earlier in the essay.

Total mark awarded = 18 out of 25

How the candidate could have improved their answer

- The candidate could have improved their answer by ensuring that references to context are closely linked to the question and fluently included in the core arguments made. The same applies to application of varying interpretations and opinions where valid references are made, but not always with clear relevance.
- The candidate could also improve by making more consistent use of specific episodes and details, either through textual reference or quotation. Use of these details ensures that points do not become assertive or vague and helps to secure personal views and lines of argument. Whilst there is a good deal of personal insight, the candidate phrases these points in the same way throughout the answer, missing opportunities to broaden the scope of their discussion.
- The candidate's answer reflects elements of Level 4 and Level 5 achievement, just reaching the threshold for Level 5.

Example Candidate Response – low

Examiner comments

7 a plan
~~that~~ women provided for men
 ↳ didn't live "lived in the gaps of the story"
 ↳ better always man work for
 "somebody" "hurts me"
 counter
 Jezebel + "want let the husbands grind you down"
 Wives / Mothers + hurts

7 a The quotation "From each according to her ability, to each according to his needs" applies to the Handmaid's Tale to a large extent because the women live to serve the men, or commanders.
 1 When the republic of Gilead had formed, it was assigned that women would be assigned to a man in order to bear his children. These women even had their names changed to "Of-" and then the name of the man they served. These women didn't get to live their own life, they had to "live through the gaps in the stories". They only had one purpose, to bear children ~~and~~ for the man.
 2 This life style was so extreme, Offred states "it hurts Cherl to tell it over, over again." The women only served to bring children, they did not get a life of their own.
 3

- 1 The answer opens with a very brief introduction that acknowledges the question.
- 2 Basic points are made in relation to Gilead. Rather than simply stating these basic points, the candidate could improve by using the information to make an argument related to the question.
- 3 This point is supported and straightforward. It could be improved through development and commentary on the situation rather than stating what happens and what is said.

Example Candidate Response – low, continued

Examiner comments

4 The Republic of Gilead was under the impression that ~~the men~~ they were helping the world by increasing the population and having total control over it. This was done by women serving men. While it was probably better for the men, it definitely wasn't for the women. A perfect example of the quote, "better doesn't always mean better for everyone. Better always means worse for someone". It was arguably better for the men, but definitely worse for the women. They only tried to serve men's needs. 5

6 Another example of women serving men is at Jezebel, a place of prostitution. While women have some more control here than the handmaids, it's ultimately still a service to the men. For example, Offred is given a → revealing outfit to wear to Jezebel. She is then assumed to be a prostitute and commander Fred tries to get with her. While women working there have some power, they are still filling men's needs. The government also believes that even this is too much power for a woman, and that they should completely serve a man for childbirth.

8 On the other hand, Offred is given a unique opportunity by her commander to hold some power. She is invited to read and play games with him well 1 condition. That she gives him a kiss every time. This gives a handmaid power, but not enough to be independent and thus still serving a man. Wives have a lot of power but they still serve the commander/husband. Handmaids and Aunts help the handmaids, but will also have to listen to their commander. This shows that all women living in Gilead serve a man.

9 In conclusion, the quote "From each according to her ability; to each according to his needs" relates to the handmaids tale and is significant to a large extent because the women of Gilead like to serve the men.

Fred suspected Offred when hope by help her don't let the husband and you damn this governor permission, from her commander to fight freely and introduces the idea of hope.

4 This section drifts into narration. Points about the story can be used as evidence to secure a line of argument or as details for analysis but narration on its own is ineffective as an approach.

5 There is some attempt to make a personal comment here and the candidate uses the modifier, 'arguably' to refer to the existence of other opinions.

6 There is some relevant, if limited, argument here. It could be improved through use of details and reference to specific episodes in the novel.

7 The argument continues but is only partially clear. This section would benefit from development and supporting detail.

8 The candidate attempts to consider varying opinions and begins to make a straightforward, relevant comment but loses fluency part way through. The candidate tries to improve the comment by adding the note in the margin. This is partially successful.

9 The conclusion is brief and insubstantial. This could be improved if it made a reflective, conclusive point related to earlier arguments made.

Total mark awarded = 9 out of 25

How the candidate could have improved their answer

- The candidate could have improved their answer by taking a more strategic approach to developing a supported and focused argument.
- The candidate could have developed points in more detail, expanding on ideas through regular use of supporting detail and textual reference, including quotations.
- The candidate could have used planning time to explore the direction of their answer and ensure a coherent structure with progression of ideas through linked paragraphs. Where the candidate has relied on narration, they could have used points from the story to make arguments about structure and character.
- The answer could also have been improved through more clear personal engagement with the text and question and a sharper focus on analytical features.

Common mistakes candidates made in this question

- Lack or loss of focus on the question. This sometimes related to misunderstanding of the question.
- Inconsistent or undeveloped use of specific details, episodes or quotations from the novel to illustrate points made.
- Insecure or lack of analysis, particularly in terms of structure and form.
- Approaches to personal response and/or varying opinions that lack relevance or breadth of expression.
- Undeveloped or incomplete arguments.

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