Eduqas GCSE English Literature

Key messages from the Examiners' Reports.

Component 1

Characteristics of good extract responses:
- Clear and sustained focus on the question asked and on the details in the extract
- Selection of short, apt references to support points made
- Critical probing of inferences, implicit meanings and subtext as well as more surface ideas
- Wide-ranging coverage of the extract
- Close examination of how the language/imagery used helps to convey meaning

Ways in which performance in the extract question could be improved:
- More detailed coverage of the extract, managing comment on the beginning, middle and end
- More selection of supporting references rather than general impressions
- More practice on probing subtext and interpreting what is really going on in the extract
- Less reference to contextual factors when AO3 is not addressed in this question
- Careful adherence to the rubric requirements of the paper to ensure that candidates are only answering questions on the texts that they have studied

Characteristics of good essay responses:
- Close tracking of a character / relationship / theme across the whole text
- Selection of a range of apt events and specific details to support thoughtful ideas
- Some analysis of the writer's intentions when creating characters and plots
- Highlighting of important turning points and key contrasts and their effects
- Careful spelling and punctuation, with vocabulary and sentence structure used to control meaning effectively

Ways in which performance in the essay question could be improved:
- Tracking a character / relationship / theme across the whole text, with effective coverage of later acts
- More focus on developing a personal engagement with the text rather than formulaic answers
- Practice in creating clear, cohesive arguments which address the question asked
- Practice in selecting detailed textual evidence for ideas
- Practice in proof-reading responses to avoid careless technical errors, such as forgetting use of capital letters for character names

Characteristics of good poetry responses:
- Careful tracking of the poem set for Question 7.1, with detailed coverage of the whole poem
- Probing of subtext, tentative interpretation rooted in the poems
- Strong focus on imagery, language and the effects they create
- Interweaving of relevant contextual detail into discussion
- Sensible selection of a second poem to suit the theme for comparison in Question 7.2
- Detailed, developed comparison of ideas, language and context in Question 7.2

<u>Ways in which performance in the poetry question could be improved:</u>
- More detailed coverage of the whole poem set in Question 7.1
- Practice in supporting ideas with detailed reference to the poems
- Selection of an appropriate poem for comparison, with a strong focus on the theme of the question
- Effective revision of anthology poems to ensure the ability to recall and make good use of textual detail
- Practice a structured approach to comparison, ensuring effective coverage of both poems and detailed comparative comments in Question 7.2
- Incorporation of relevant contextual detail to support overall discussion in both Question 7.1 and Question 7.2

Component 2

<u>Characteristics of good Section A responses:</u>
- Good answers move swiftly from highlighting key details in the extract into a wider discussion across the text
- Use the extract as a springboard for a wider discussion, with a few key words or images explored
- Select a range of apt events and specific details to support thoughtful ideas
- Choose quotations wisely and analyse them effectively
- Show that candidates have been prepared and know the specific characteristics of the writer's techniques and find examples of these within the given extract
- Comment on significant relationships and/or themes presented
- Sustain focus on the question
- Some analysis of the writer's intentions when creating characters and plots
- Ensure that contextual details are wholly relevant to the question

<u>Ways in which performance in Section A could be improved:</u>
- Encourage candidates to be selective in what they use for the extract to demonstrate their AO2 skills. They are not required to track through the extract and analyse it in exhaustive detail, doing so will significantly affect the AO1 marks
- Avoid assertions and general impressions
- Avoid feature spotting and the naming of unnecessary parts
- Similarly, avoid focus on analysis of sentence length, punctuation features or more non-fiction rhetorical devices, which again, can be an unproductive use of the extract
- Give candidates guidance and practice on different ways to use the extract depending on where it is in the text
- Avoid unnecessary contextual details as AO3 is not assessed in Section A
- Encourage pupils to learn key spellings such as character names and authors and proof read their responses to Section A to eradicate simple errors such as capital letters or apostrophes
- Avoid references to film versions of the texts

Characteristics of good Section B essay responses:
•   Clear and sustained focus on the question asked
•   Wide-ranging coverage of the extract, with relevant selection of short references to support points made
•   The extract is used sensibly at a relevant point or points of the essay
•   Reference to a range of relevant points across the wider text
•   Critical probing of inferences, implicit meanings and subtext as well as more surface ideas
•   Close analysis of how the language, techniques and imagery in the extract and wider text help to present the focus of the question
•   Clear appreciation of how contextual factors influence characters and themes
•   Suitable analytical style of writing

Ways in which performance in Section B could be improved:
•   Plan where coverage of the extract will be best placed in the essay
•   More detailed coverage of the extract and wider text, including the beginning, middle and end
•   More selection of detailed supporting references rather than general impressions
•   Avoid unfocused narrative and retelling of the story
•   More practice on probing subtext and interpretation
•   Practise creating clear, cohesive arguments which address the question asked
•   More focused and integrated discussion of how contextual factors influence writers' characters, themes and ideas. Avoid contextual 'bolt ons'
•   Avoid reference to plays and films when discussing prose texts
•   Practise and develop an analytical style of essay writing

Characteristics of good poetry responses:
•   A thorough examination of the first poem in Question 3.1
•   A thorough examination of the second poem in Question 3.2, either as a discrete element or as part of the comparison
•   Clear comparison of ideas, mood and some reference to how the poets use language
•   Detailed selection from each poem and comments on these selections
•   Candidates had adhered to the timing suggestions given in the paper and spent twice as long on the comparison element as on the initial question

Ways in which performance in the poetry question could be improved:
•   Ensure that the first poem is adequately analysed in Question 3.1
•   Ensure that the second poem is adequately analysed in depth in Question 3.2
•   Practise linking a range of poems and poetic techniques, including imagery and figurative language, to meaning
•   Avoid spotting techniques and patterns with no reference to meaning
•   Develop the use of supporting references to support understanding of subtext
•   Avoid 'over reading' of hidden meanings in the poems
•   Experience in reading poems where similar topics are handled differently by poets
•   Practise timings across the exam to ensure sufficient time is given to the poetry