**The following material is intended to support teachers in their marking and understanding of the expectations of the NEA task. You are encouraged to use it for departmental standardisation purposes. However, the material must not be shared with candidates, under any circumstance.**

**Component 4: Prose Study**

**Candidate E: Band 2**

**‘Both Leo and Stephen are made vulnerable in the texts by the lack of clear strong male role models.’ In light of this statement, compare the ways in which both authors present the male characters in these texts. During your writing make it clear how other readers and contexts have influenced your interpretations of the texts.**

**AO1/AO4** Starts with rather clumsy dictionary definition and links both texts loosely to the title. Candidate’s grasp of ‘vulnerability’ and engagement with view quoted is not fully secure from outset. Introduction lacks clarity with lapses in expression.

Vulnerability is the state of being unprotected to the possibility of being attacked or harmed, either physically or emotionally.

Both Stephen in ‘Spies’ and Leo in ‘The Go Between’ experience a lack of strong male role models. To an extent, it has more of an effect on Leo in ‘The Go Between’ as by the end of ‘Spies’ Stephen has discovered all is not what it seems and in effect has grown up, shedding vulnerability using character relationships, the portrayal of naivety, for example Leo’s naïve innocent comments about ‘spooning’, and numerous structural and linguistic techniques.

Some critics would suggest Stephen and Leo are vulnerable due to the cruelty exercised by the male characters. However, I think that both Frayn and Hartley deliberately demonstrate that female characters are more to blame than the male characters, as they make it more obvious to the reader and there is limited evidence to suggest males are accountable for Stephen and Leo’s vulnerability.

**AO2/AO4** Makes simple comment on ‘structure’ but not fully developed or supported which makes attempted link between texts merely assertive and superficial.

**AO5** Attempts to give own view and shape argument in simple way.

Firstly, we see Leo stuck in past looking back at diary overlooking situations he can forget. Structurally this shows he hasn’t let go, and perhaps emphasising his vulnerability over Stephen in ‘Spies’. It is clear to the reader that Leo Colston does not have a permanent role model due to when his ‘father died…in 1899’. Hartley suggests to the reader that vulnerability implemented by the lack of male figures has a deteriorating affect, but the women in book are more pro-active leading him into vulnerability. Mrs Colston Leo’s mother gives Leo instability ‘she needed a social frame’ as she is socially ambitious; she’s shows to Leo she is insecure and socially focussed with her current standing and identity in society.

**AO2** trying to engage but treating characters as if real people and quotation taken out of context not very supportive of claim.

**AO1** Technical errors in basic sentence punctuation and poor proofreading obscure meaning. Struggling to express ideas clearly at times.

A Marxist critic would suggest as she was too aware of public opinions and her social status she hasn’t given Leo any real guidance and this has caused vulnerability. I agree as especially because Leo father has passed, it can be considered that he would look for direction through his mother. Additionally, I agree with the statement as Leo is left knowing where social standards are and as she has imprinted on Leo where he is socially, when Leo is thrown into Brandham hall, and into upper-class setting where he may feel detached from his identity which creates a whole sense of defencelessness.

**AO5** Attempts consideration of critical reading but very broad and assertive as not supported by close reference to text.

This can also be seen in ‘Spies’ when Stephen mixes with the Hayward’s. ‘it is my sense that social hierarchies are most psychologically damaging because they require a splitting of human capacities (between genders, races, classes) that, in healthy, ought to be integrated rather than split.’ Here, a psychoanalytical critique correlates with the view that social hierarchy can be psychologically damaging which encourages feelings of vulnerability. Leo suffers a nervous breakdown following his stay at Brandham hall, additionally supporting that the social-focussed surrounding he was in, and pressures from Mrs Colston had caused vulnerability. Overall, I believe Hartley allows Mrs Colston to cause this damage to Leo with her socially obsessed manner. At that the social classes were severely separated. But it was possible for people to move up the hierarchy by, for example, marrying into a family of a higher class, as Marian did. Brandham hall is where Leo also meets Marian, who creates a lot more vulnerability.

**AO4/AO5** Superficial but valid connection. Quotes rather vague psychoanalytical theory and attempts discussion but exacerbates ‘real people’ approach to characters.

In *Spies* we can see an interaction between Mrs Hayward and Stephen where Stephen is in a particularly vulnerable and exposed position. Mrs Hayward visits Stephen in his hiding place in the shrubberies and tells him that she is aware he is following her, and that he should stop now before he gets hurt. The language Frayn has selected ‘stop…before he gets hurt’. Frayn has chosen this language to show to the reader that this is a threat and to show Mrs Hayward has a dangerous side. This dangerous side being exposed to the reader creates a foreboding atmosphere and puts Stephen into a vulnerable position. Frayn also uses the imperative ‘stop’, this makes the dialogue from Mrs Hayward more exaggerated and this overemphasis can create a more intensive shock for the reader. Frayn also uses ellipsis punctuation which introduces a a pause and is a basic technique for creating tension. The ellipsis encourages attention from the reader and an opportunity to add their own meaning to the situation. Differently to the *Go Between*, the more mature female characters create vulnerability in different ways, Mrs Colson more oblivious and imposes social class too forcefully to create vulnerability whereas Mrs Hayward uses a harsher, threat-like, and in my opinion more intentional method to create vulnerability.

**AO4 Attempts link but assertive and not well-supported**.

**AO2** Simple, rather assertive comment on language use. Makes generalised, quite vague points about ellipsis

In Brandham hall Leo meets Marian, she uses Leo to send messages and he is totally enthralled with her to the point of imagining connections, relations between the two ‘she opened her blue eyes…as she rarely did for anyone except me’. Frayn uses a descriptive structure which can paint a picture mirroring the pictures that are imagined in Leo’s mind. Marian saying ‘he’s a darling’ resonates in Leos head giving him ‘a sweet taste in his mouth’. This can produce vulnerability as he is open to hurt as we know her true intentions of using Leo’s crush to her advantage. Frayn uses of dramatic irony gives not even the characters, but the reader advantage over Leo which emphasises his vulnerability. Also, the need for affection from Leo shows he already has feelings of apprehension. All of which create a foreboding atmosphere. Overall, taking advantage of a person can extremely expose them into vulnerability and bluntly, Marian is using Leo’s affection to her, for her own ends, which is to be with Ted. To refer to context, during the 1900s, society had expectations for young people to conform and marry within their ‘class’. Marian rebelled against these conformities and has a secret relationship with Ted who is working class, this entails the secrecy and why she manipulates Leo for her own selfishness. Hartley uses a lot of symbolic, natural imagery to present the relationship between Marian and Leo. ‘It was the picture of evil but also pictures of health’. A critic had the opinion that this quotation suggests that Leo does notice the ‘evil side’ of Marian, or in other words that he is being manipulated. However, I disagree I believe he is completely awed, because Hartley’s use of the image of the ‘atropa belladonna’ the deadly night shade could possibly the idea of something being secretive, deadly, a ‘façade’. Marian is a façade to Leo, she has a pleasant exterior and she give the impression of being genuine, however, beneath that exterior she is using Leo, just like the poison and toxicity beneath the deadly nightshade (also named Belladonna), despite its pleasing exterior. Hartley continues to use natural imagery, to show the vulnerability Leo exhibits due to his lack of male role models. Leo is described a ‘moth’ who has been ‘caught…in the beam from her eye’. Specifically, ‘moths’ present a fragile creature, they are also known for slowly eating away things which could mirror the social class system of the 1900’s. Moreover, this emphasises his vulnerability in his relationship with Marian and his place in society.

**AO3 Acknowledges importance of social context.**

**AO2** Attempts analysis of technique but vague and not clearly worded. Makes valid point about dramatic irony but not clearly supported.

**AO2** Attempts comment on language but muddled use of quoted evidence.

**AO5** Tries to engage with view

**AO2** Some grasp of implied meaning and attempt to discuss devices.

**AO3** asserted connection. Not clear.

Correspondingly, in ‘spies’, Stephens relationship with Barbara Berrill makes him vulnerable, he slightly feels threatened by her, but also attracted to her meaning he is opening himself up to manipulation. This is a clear link between the two novels. One could suggest that Barbara Berrill does not have an overwhelming effect on Stephen and it is his lack of male role models that contributes to his innocence and naïve personality. However, personally, it is clear that ‘Barbara tries to grow Stephen up too quickly’, Frayn makes it clear that Barbara Berrill sparks Stephen to grow up fast, with his sexual awakening and introduction to smoking unlike Leo who hangs onto his naivety. Premature maturity could be perceived as being ‘unprotected’ because Stephen has been brought out of his childhood ‘bubble’, however he seems to end out more mature and less naïve than Leo by the end, as Barbara acts as a strong guidance, Stephen had someone to look too whereas Leo is more vulnerable by never having one solid role model.

**AO4/AO5** Superficial connection and view. Not supported so as to make convincing or clear.

A critic to oppose that women in the ‘go between’ create vulnerability, ‘women in the go between make Leo less of a susceptible character, they in fact uplift Leo…’ I had never heard her apologise before…gave me a strange feeling of power and sweetness.’ I believe this is an ambiguous quote, you can look at it in a powerful, ‘uplifting’ way, but in my opinion it just adds to Leos false sense of security as he delves deeper into Marians ‘trap’. Contrasting the view Marian was uplifting Leo, in the middle section of the book we see her mock Leo when he can’t pronounce ‘Hugh’. This really accentuates his lack of guidance but also shows how Marian puts down Leo, this additionally shows clearly the social divide and thus makes Leo feel embarrassed furthermore encouraging feelings of vulnerability, and perhaps the fact he doesn’t fit in with this society.

**AO1/AO4** Lapses in clear expression. Trying to use other views.

**AO3** Repeats same broad connection to social class

Leos naivety also shows his lack of guidance. ‘I know I did, but it’s really a job for your father. He’s the one to tell you’. Obviously, we know Leos father had passed away, and because Mrs Colston blanketed Leo he has and no clear direction, unlike Stephen in ‘spies’ who had Barbara as a guiding figure. Overall Hartley has presented to the readers that Leo has had no father figure in his life consequently his mother has blanketed him and influenced Leo into a somewhat feminine character. I believe this is another reason why Mrs Colston has made Leo vulnerable because she hasn’t taken a role of direction.

**AO1** Claims weakened and made assertive by lack of support but some focus on task.

**AO2** Supports and comments on language. Some valid points made and grasp of implied meaning

There are moments in the go between where we directly see the contrasting feelings towards the female and male characters, showing directly that the men are less likely to contribute to the vulnerability. A quote from Leo about Trimingham, ‘I was aware of something stable in his nature. He gave me a feeling of security’. The lexical field of ‘stable’ and ‘security’ emphasises to the reader the safety of reliability Leo holds on the male character Trimingham. Contrastingly, Hartley describes Mrs Maudsley in this quote ‘caught like a moth in the beam from her eye, that black searchlight’. Hartley Describing Mrs Maudsley as a ‘black searchlight’ is cold and negative, it suggests to the reader that she is out to get Leo, especially when he is ‘caught like a moth’. The verb ‘caught’ suggests he is stuck and captured, additionally Leo being compared to a moth gives emphasis to Leo as a fragile, breakable and delicate being. In addition, Marian is described as ‘hooded, Hawk-like’, this animalistic imagery gives Marian a fierce persona and ‘hooded’ suggests mysterious, perhaps emphasising the ambiguous intentions when she manipulates Leo. Compared to the security of the male characters, Hartley makes it obvious how the female characters make Leos character more vulnerable.

To conclude, Leo and Stephen have both been subject to vulnerability from the female characters. Leos infatuation with Marian led to his wrong judgement of her. Society in the 1900s undoubtedly contributed to the major crisis in the novel and Leo’s vulnerability, as additionally if there was no pressure on Marian to marry an upper-class man, the ending may have been more positive.

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