

Rothesay Academy

English Department

Higher Revision
Programme

Applying the marking
criteria: Critical Essay.



Higher CE Criteria

Name _____

Date _____

Class _____

Unseen Question Y/N Exam Conditions Y/N Special Arrangements _____

Category VI 7 or 5	Category V 11 or 9	Category IV 13 or 15	Category III 17 or 19	Category II 21 or 23	Category I 25
<p>An essay which falls into this category does so because of serious shortcomings, such as;</p> <p>significant misunderstanding of the text</p> <p>extreme thinness</p> <p>serious weaknesses in expression</p> <p>serious weaknesses in technical accuracy</p> <p>Marks under 5 could be awarded in exceptional circumstances such as extreme brevity (e.g. just a few lines)</p>	<p>An essay which falls into this category for a variety of reasons.</p> <p>It could be that it;</p> <p>fails to achieve sufficient technical accuracy</p> <p>or that any knowledge and understanding of the text are not deployed as a response relevant to the task</p> <p>or that any evaluation analysis attempted is indiscriminating or unfocused</p> <p>or the answer is simply too thin</p>	<p>Understanding</p> <p><i>Reasonable</i> knowledge and understanding of the text <i>as a whole</i> will be used to address the question.</p> <p>The essay is structured in such a way as to <i>meet the requirements of most of the</i> question.</p> <p>Some evidence to support the argument is selected which is <i>relevant and appropriate to the task.</i></p>	<p>Understanding</p> <p>Knowledge and understanding of the text <i>as a whole</i>, which is <i>mainly sound</i>, will be used to address the question.</p> <p>The essay is structured in such a way as to <i>meet the requirements of the</i> question.</p> <p>The selection of evidence to support the argument is <i>relevant and appropriate to the task.</i></p>	<p>Understanding</p> <p><i>Sound</i> knowledge and insight into the text <i>as a whole</i> will be used to address the question <i>fully</i>.</p> <p>The essay is <i>soundly structured</i> as a <i>genuine response</i> to the question.</p> <p>The selection of evidence to support the argument is <i>sensible and extensive.</i></p>	<p>Understanding</p> <p><i>Thorough knowledge and insight</i> into the text <i>as a whole</i> will be used to address the question <i>fully and convincingly</i>.</p> <p>The essay is <i>effectively structured</i> as a <i>genuine response</i> to the question.</p> <p>The selection of evidence to support the argument is <i>appropriate extensive and skilful.</i></p>
		<p>Analysis</p> <p><i>Some Awareness</i> will be demonstrated of literary/linguistic techniques being exploited.</p> <p><i>Analysis is focused on the demands of the question.</i></p>	<p>Analysis</p> <p><i>Awareness</i> will be demonstrated of literary/linguistic techniques being exploited.</p> <p><i>Analysis is focused on the demands of the question.</i></p>	<p>Analysis</p> <p>There will be a <i>sound analysis</i> of literary/linguistic techniques <i>focused on the demands of the question.</i></p>	<p>Analysis</p> <p>There will be a <i>sophisticated analysis</i> of literary/linguistic techniques <i>focused on the demands of the question.</i></p>
		<p>Evaluation</p> <p>There is a <i>some evaluative stance</i> with respect to the text(s) and the task, although this is not necessarily explicit.</p>	<p>Evaluation</p> <p>There is a <i>some evaluative stance</i> with respect to the text(s) and the task, although this is not necessarily explicit.</p>	<p>Evaluation</p> <p>There is a <i>clear evaluative stance</i> with respect to the text(s) and the task, although this is not necessarily explicit.</p>	<p>Evaluation</p> <p>There is a <i>committed evaluative stance</i> with respect to the text(s) and the task, although this is not necessarily explicit.</p>
		<p>Expression</p> <p><i>Expression is adequate.</i></p>	<p>Expression</p> <p><i>Expression is satisfactory.</i></p>	<p>Expression</p> <p><i>Expression is controlled.</i></p>	<p>Expression</p> <p><i>Expression is controlled and fluent.</i></p>

Comment _____

Critical Essay Revision

Aim: To improve our exam technique

We are learning to:

- Re-familiarise ourselves with the SQA marking criteria for critical essays.
- Identify strengths and weaknesses in exemplar essays by applying this criteria.
- Reflect on our own critical essay writing skills and seek ways to improve.
- Prepare to write a practice critical essay by planning responses to exemplar questions.

What I'm looking for:

- A heightened awareness of the standard required to succeed at critical essay writing.
- A checklist for future reference.
- Improved planning & structure in critical essay writing.

Lesson Activities:

- Carousel activity (marking of exemplar essay)
- Feedback & discussion.
- Group checklist activity.
- Feedback and discussion.
- Individual reflection on how to improve.
- Planning exercise.

S5 Critical Essay

Exemplar Marking

Essay 1:

Grade:

**Comment based on
criteria:**

Essay 2:

Grade:

**Comment based on
criteria:**

Essay 3:

Grade:

**Comment based on
criteria:**

Essay 4:

Grade:

**Comment based on
criteria:**

Essay 5:

Grade:

**Comment based on
criteria:**

Essay 6:

Grade:

**Comment based on
criteria:**



Now, based on what you have learned through this assessment exercise, identify two ways in which you feel you could improve your critical essay performance.

What areas should I aim to improve?	What do I need to do to improve in these areas?



In your groups, decide on five important factors that you would include in a critical essay checklist for someone who was sitting Higher English.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

As a class we will feedback on this exercise and formulate a critical essay checklist which I will e-mail to you for use when you are revising.

Essay Planning for Exam

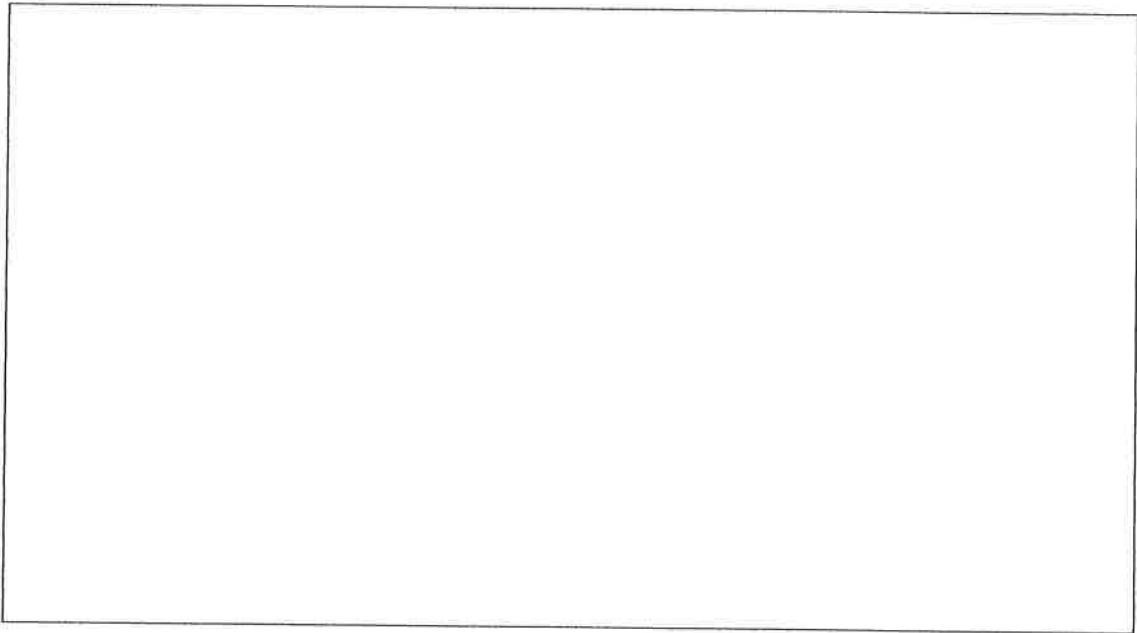
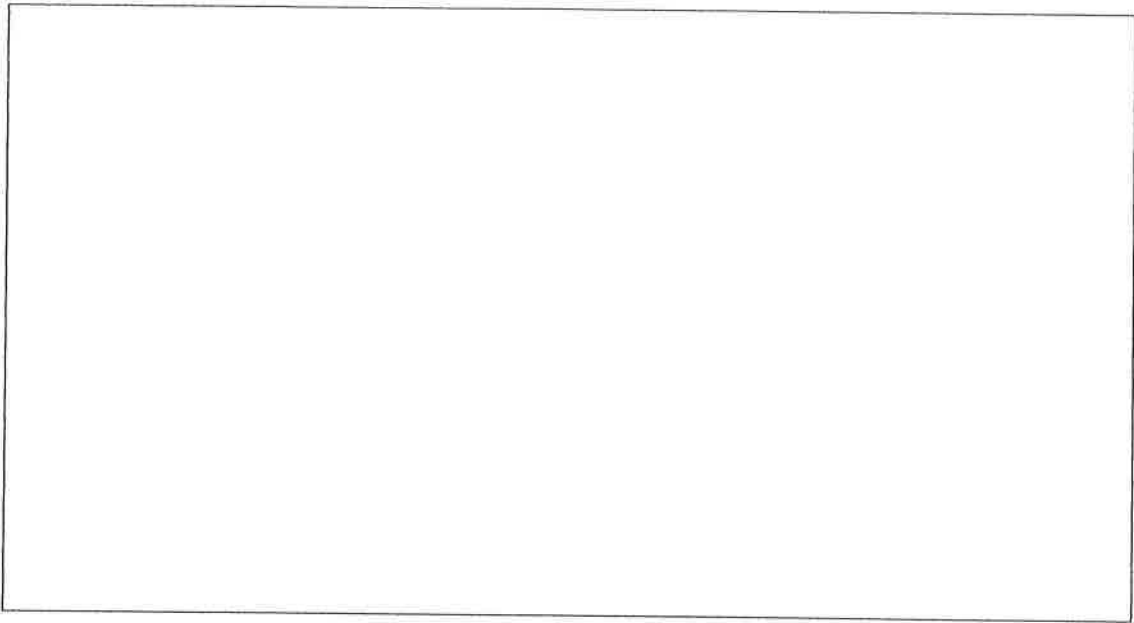
Essay Title:

Choose a poem in which you feel there is a significant moment which reveals the central idea of the poem.

Show how the poet achieves this in an effective way.

Introduction:

Themes:



Conclusion:

Essay Planning for Exam

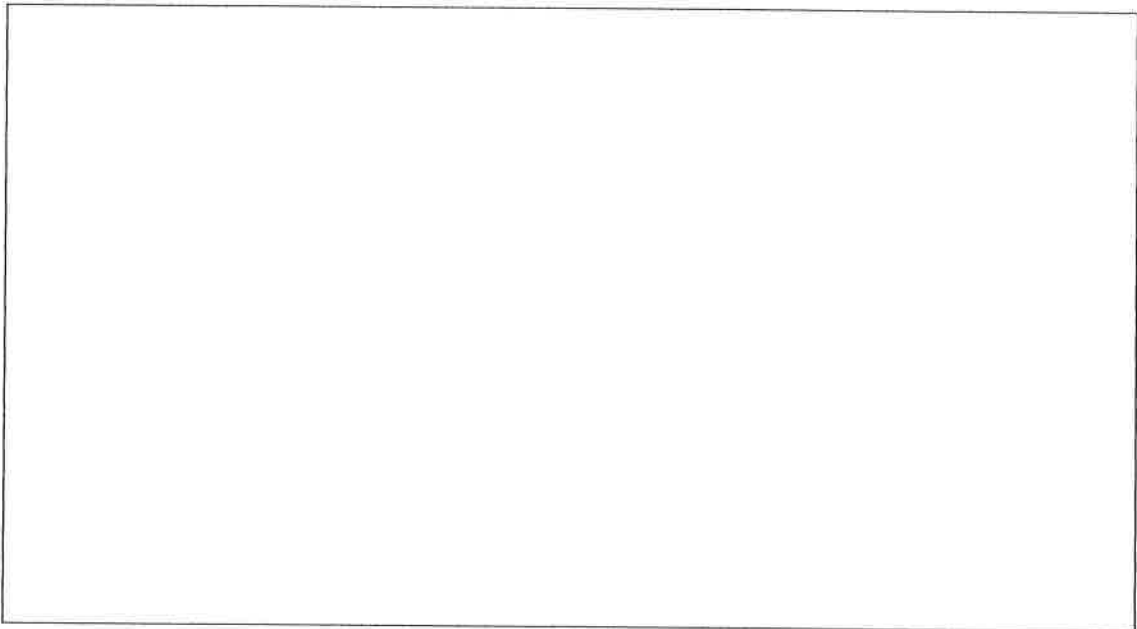
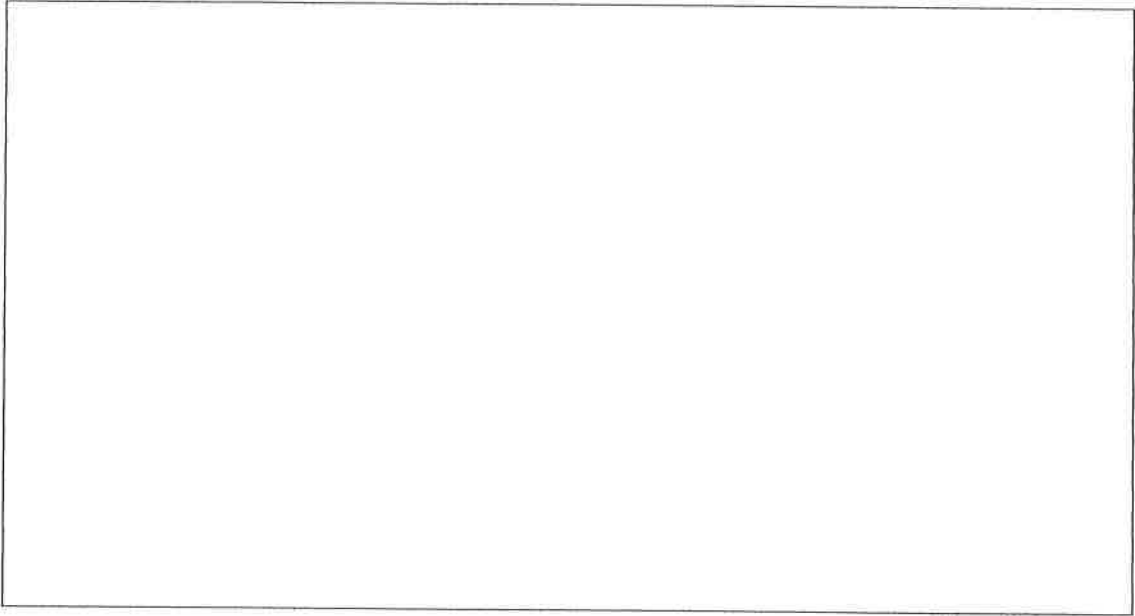
Essay Title:

Choose a poem in which contrast is used in order to clarify a key idea.

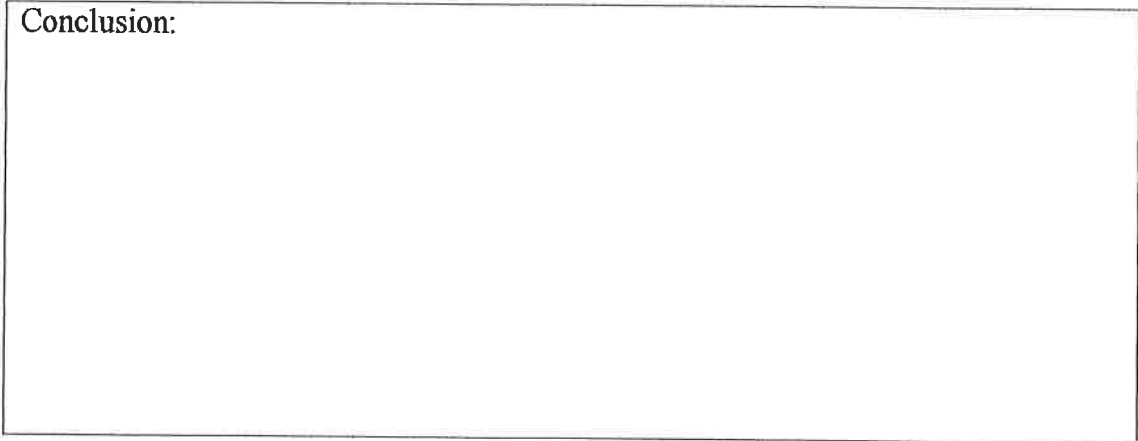
Examine in detail the poet's use of contrast and show how it was effective in clarifying this key idea.

Introduction:

Themes:



Conclusion:



Essay Planning for Exam

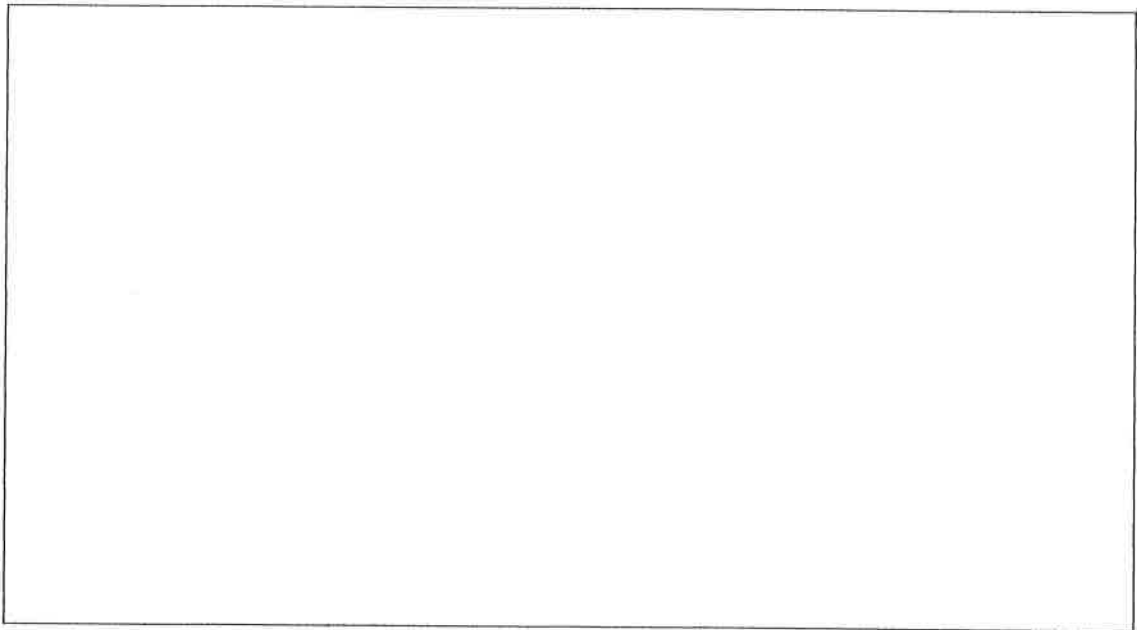
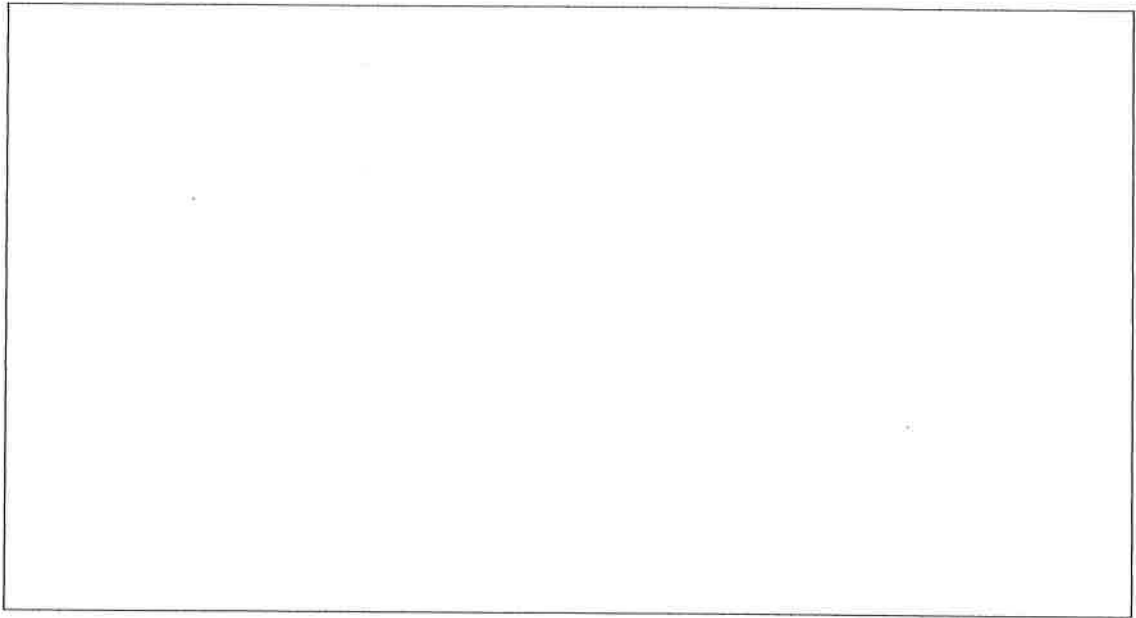
Essay Title:

Choose a poem with an impressive opening.

Explain why you think the opening was so impressive and discuss how effectively it prepared you for the rest of the poem.

Introduction:

Themes:



Conclusion:

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, occupying the bottom third of the page. It is intended for writing a conclusion. The word "Conclusion:" is printed in the top-left corner of this box.

D. Hall

~~with Lord D manipulation & loyalty~~
~~expand down S. dignity → Harry S.~~
~~S. out of place~~

In the novel 'The Remains of the Day' by Kazuo Ishiguro, the setting is in the ~~1920s~~ 1920s and 30s, and post-war. Both these times were of great social and political upheaval, and this setting is essential to conveying many of the writer's themes, such as ~~the~~ loss, dignity and loyalty.

can use
 - lang
 - nar
 ka - abau
 + r

The elderly ~~the~~ butler, Stevens, of Darlington Hall, an English ~~&~~ country house, goes on a car journey to the West Country, in the hope of employing a previous housekeeper. During the journey, flashback is used to tell the story of Stevens' life and the history of Darlington Hall.

more
 naturally
 into
 this

The manor, Darlington Hall, is beautifully described and has a symbolical significance to the novel. The description of 'a series of orange shafts breaking the gloom of the corridor.'

reflects the beauty of the house, and also a slightly dreamy quality. This shows how lovely the house was in its great days in the 1920s-30s. The importance of routines and chores at this time is huge, and Stevens places great emphasis on it, shown by the time he reprimands the housekeeper for her lack of 'house knowledge' (the proper place for ornaments). The importance of well-polished silver is also shown: 'it was a public index of ~~the~~ a house's standard.' However, post-war, Darlington Hall's grandeur has declined. Many of the rooms have been shut down, there are only a few staff remaining and the silver company, 'Griffen & Co.' is obsolete. This decline of an English country house reflects the huge changes in English society, ^{*} which become clear later on. ^{*} such as the demise of the aristocracy.

The ~~landowner~~ man Stevens serves, Lord Darlington, is extremely involved in politics. After the First World War, Germany was forced into a state of economic depression. A close

lovely
use
of
detail

-wished
to get

Even when the Jewish maids are dismissed, Stevens calmly points out that:

our duties are not to our own foibles and sentiments, but to the wisher of our employer.'

Stevens never accepts that his loyalty to the weak Lord Darlington was misplaced, but dismisses his poorer characteristics as 'modesty' and focuses on the good intentions, rather than the ^{shocking} results. This is made clear by the reaction of a young man:

"You just let all this go on before you and you never think to look at it for what it is."

It never seems to occur to Stevens to have his own political opinions, ~~he~~: he ~~is~~ is utterly devoted to Lord Darlington:

~~He~~ 'I will not consider my vocation fulfilled until I have done all I can to see his lordship through. The day his lordship's work is complete, I will be able to call myself a well-contented man.'

It seems that Stevens has no identity beyond his position as Lord Darlington's butler.

Stevens has been isolated from change in the world, and his attitudes are at odds with those of the people of post-war England. When the new owner of Darlington Hall comments "And you're a genuine, old-fashioned English butler..."

it seems as if Stevens is a rare antique, rather than a person. A crucial idea for Stevens is dignity, which he sees as 'crucially, a butler's ability never to abandon the professional being he inhabits.'

Hence, he feels it is not his place to comment on political matters:

"I am unable to assist in this matter."

However, in a small village, he meets people with views very ~~more~~ different to his own:

"There's no dignity to be had in being a slave."

"We fought for that right... It's one of the

privileges of being born English that no matter who you are... you can express your opinion freely."

The strength of this view in post-war England contrasts with Stevens' feeling that it is up to other people to make decisions: there is a limit to what the ordinary man can learn and know?

However, Stevens renounces his notion of his own dignity at the end:

'I trusted in his lordship's wisdom. I can't even say I made ^{my} ~~his~~ own mistakes.

Really - one has to ask - what dignity is there in that?'

He understands that his own unwavering loyalty and stunted concept of dignity have left him unfulfilled. The world has changed around him: people are exuberantly celebrating on the pier, rather than demonstrating the 'quiet restraint' he admires. The traditional values he has lived by, in the framework of the manor house are now obsolete.

'The Remains of the Day' shows the contrast between political and social attitudes before and after the Second World War. The setting of a grand manor and the political involvement of the aristocracy (which is meaningless) reflect this as they decline. The central character, Stevens, is isolated from the post-war world by his notions of loyalty and dignity, which mean he loses the meaning in his life.

I

25

- good job!

- sophisticated

met all req. of top cat.

- minor flaws: parentheses on 6/7 adds nothing

Higher English Critical Essay 2008

Script	6	Text	The Remains of the Day	Question	8
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Key Features

This is a sophisticated response in which the candidate has clearly selected from an extensive and most impressive knowledge of the text. The question is addressed fully and convincingly, especially in the candidate's handling of change over the course of three decades. The candidate writes a fluent and perceptive response to the chosen question.

Decision

- This essay is best described as "Outstanding" and is therefore in Category I.
- It is awarded 25 marks.

Detailed Commentary

From the outset the candidate makes clear the period (1920s, 1930s and post-war) in which Ishiguro sets his novel. One indication that this script may be a successful answer to this question is suggested by the word "upheaval". This candidate is proposing to discuss not just the writer's evocation of the setting in time but also the social and political changes of the era. The focus is to be on the use of flashback "to tell the story of Stevens's life and the history of Darlington Hall." (6/1)

An effective structure emerges, from the third paragraph on 6/1 moving on to 6/2, when the physical setting of Darlington Hall is used as a symbol of an aristocratic world which has fallen into decline by the 1940s. The candidate supports his fluent comments with apt, concise quotations which are woven seamlessly into the flow of his argument.

Having explored the changing social world of the Hall before and after World War II, the candidate turns his attention at the foot of 6/2 through 6/3 and 6/4 to Stevens's master, Lord Darlington, as a representative of the social class whose world changes irrevocably from the 1920s to the 1940s. The candidate skilfully discusses the incongruity of the master's innate nobility towards a Germany defeated in World War I, set against his weakness in allowing himself to be influenced by fascist and anti-Semitic forces, as exemplified by his sacking of two Jewish maids (6/3).

In tandem with the candidate's skilful discussion of the character of Stevens's employer, he never loses sight of Stevens's unswerving loyalty, sense of duty and dignity (6/4 to 6/6). He carefully balances the butler's life which "has been isolated from change in the world" (6/5) with the comments of ordinary people in post-war England who hold diametrically opposed views to his own – "there's no dignity to be had in being a slave." (6/5) This contrast is neatly summed up at the foot of 6/6 when the butler's quiet constraint is juxtaposed with the "exuberantly celebrating" people on the pier.

At the end of a most impressive essay the candidate confidently draws his essay to a very satisfying conclusion which shows his genuine insight into Stevens's character (6/7).

Category	I	Mark	25
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