**Marking like an examiner AO1**

**CANDIDATE 1**

**John Keats: *Selected Poems* (Penguin Classics)**

4(i) Re-read stanzas IX and X of ‘Isabella; or, The Pot of Basil’ on page 112. Analyse the ways in which Keats engages the reader’s senses in these lines. [20]

IX

‘Love! thou art leading me from wintry cold,

 Lady! thou leadest me to summer clime,

And I must taste the blossoms that unfold

 In its ripe warmth this gracious morning time.’

So said, his erewhile timid lips grew bold,

 And poesied with hers in dewy rhyme:

Great bliss was with them, and great happiness

Grew, like a lusty flower in June’s caress.

X

Parting they seem’d to tread upon the air,

 Twin roses by the zephyr blown apart

Only to meet again more close, and share

 The inward fragrance of each other’s heart.

She, to her chamber gone, a ditty fair

 Sang, of delicious love and honeyed dart;

He with light steps went up a western hill,

And bade the sun farewell, and joyed his fill.

Keats clearly engages the reader’s senses in these stanzas through his lexical field of warmth. The poet achieves this with descriptions such as ‘summer clime’, ‘June’s caress’ as well as ‘leading me from wintry cold’. Through this Keats perhaps suggests that the experience of love can lead us out of the lonely, cold state of isolation and into a sense of security. Therefore, through his sensuous imagery, readers are invited to feel the warm emotions of love with a positive outlook. The juxtaposition of ‘wintry cold’ and June’s caress’ highlights the stark contrast in experience. The summer month is personified in order to provide comfort which suggests love and warmth are associated with care.

In addition, Keats appeals to the reader’s sense of smell through ‘the inward fragrance of each other’s heart’. This image creates the sense that love can spread and is something to be shared. The use of ‘heart’ is effective due to the connotations of love as well as the fact emotions are personal. The image creates a peaceful and innocent tone. Keats also makes reference to the effect love can have on the sense of taste. He engages with this idea through ‘ditty fair sang, of delicious love and honeyed dart;’. Here, taste coincides with the sense of sound which effectively links love to having a lyrical quality. The use of ‘delicious

love’ as well as ‘honeyed’ creates the concpet that their emotions have a sweetness to them, again alluding to the purity of love. The enjambment may reflect the fact they feel their love is timeless.

**CANDIDATE 2**

**John Donne: *Selected Poems* (Penguin Classics)**

**2(i)** Re-read ‘Holy Sonnet V’ on page 179. Analyse Donne’s use of imagery in this poem.

 [20]

Holy Sonnet V begins positively with the conceit of Donne as a ‘little world’. This metaphor with the almost oxymoronic contrast between ‘little’ implying insignificance, and ‘world’ implying something vast and important, presents the narrator as a microcosm and as something complete and whole on its own, which is a positive image. However, despite being made of the ‘elements’, suggesting the physical building blocks of life, it is the spiritual idea of ‘angelic sprite’ which appears to be most significant as part of his world. The adjective ‘angelic’ implies a link with heaven and God, something positive and sacred. This is juxtaposed, however, by the idea that he is also comprised of ‘black sin’. The voltaic use of ‘But’ further heightens the juxtaposition between the positive, ‘angelic’ imagery in his ‘little world’ with the negative idea of ‘black’, connecting evil and death and going against God. This is reinforced by the metaphor of sin producing ‘endless night’ as the adjective ‘endless’ implies something ongoing. ‘night’ also makes a connection with the idea of sin and evil with ‘black sin’, as well as perhaps biblically referencing the darkness which followed Christ’s crucifixion.

Despite the negativity of the narrator as world ravaged and consumed by sin, the sonnet does show that the narrator regognises this and is willing to repent. The narrator accepts that ‘both parts must die’, the definite modal verb ‘must’ conveying acceptance and determination. The narrotor is willing to suffer for his sins, imploring God to ‘Pour new seas in mine eyes’ with the imperative ‘pour’ almost begging and pleading with God to suffer, if it means that he will be forgiven. Whilst the image of a desire for God to ‘Drown my world’ further directing God with imperatives, is destructive it could also be seen as healing. However, the poet instead contradicts again with the volta of ‘But’. Instead of redemption thought drowning such as in Noah’s Ark, he accepts he must be burnt, and welcomes it, reinforced by the definite modal verb ‘must’. His desire to be free of sin is so strong that the poet will accept pain, again using an imperative with ‘burn me, o Lord, with a fiery zeal’ to suggest that he wants devotion from God and to be cleansed by him. The fiery imagery could link to the Holy Spirit, yet Donne connects this with suffering which he welcomes as a sign of redemption. This is summarised by the final ending in ‘heal’ showing his deepest desire is for God to use all the suffering so that He can make Donne whole again.

**Marking like an examiner AO2**

**CANDIDATE 1**

**Philip Larkin: *The Whitsun Weddings* (Faber)**

**Carol Ann Duffy: *Mean Time* (Picador)**

**12.** “For better or for worse, things change.” In the light of this comment, examine connections between the ways in which Larkin and Duffy present ideas about change. You must analyse in detail **at least** two poems from each of your set texts. [60]

Both Larkin and Duffy express ideas about change throughout their poems. However, Larkin’s change seems to be more focused on the decline of society whereas Duffy comments on the changes to life. Larkin clearly presents a more pessimist view to change whereas Duffy offers a sense of sympathy.

Larkin’s digression about changes to society can be seen throughout ‘Essential Beauty’. Clearly, Larkin is disgusted with the growing commercialism throughout the sixties, the time at which the collection was written. This is possibly seen in the lines ‘high above the gutter a silver knife sinks into butter’. The use of rhyme emphasises the possible irony of the statement. This seemingly perfect advertisement is juxtaposed with the ‘gutter’ which connotes ideas about dirt and poverty. Here, Larkin is possibly suggesting that it is ridiculous to think that consumer products can improve one’s life as Nick Johnston Jones states ‘he discusses with dismay the encroaching consumerism of society.’ Clearly, Larkin believes that it is foolish to believe that one’s problems will go away with the simple purchase of a product by the fact that the ‘gutter’ is still present throughout the poem. Larkin evidently disagrees with the growing greed of society, possibly because he experienced the rationing of world war two and is disgusted by the change in consumerism throughout the sixties.

Duffy’s poem ‘The Captain of the 1964 Top of the Form Team’ however, paints an idealistic picture of sixties culture and the persona evidently views the changes to modern society as unfathomable. The continual pop culture references throughout the poem ‘Baby Love’ and ‘A Hard Day’s Night’ demonstrate how the persona is still obsessed with the past, with their childhood and the fact that the persona states ‘I want it back’ obviously suggests that they wished for the simplicity of that time period. Like Larkin, the persona in this poem is unhappy with the changes in society. This is paricularly seen in ‘my thick kids wince’ which possibly demonstrates a kind of loathing of contemporary youths, stating that they have grown stupid. Although the narrator in ‘Essential Beauty’ and the persona in ‘Captain’ are situated in somewhat different time periods, they both show a disgust or dissatisfaction of their contemporary society. They both want to be in the past, showing that Larkin and Duffy are alike in that they both explore people who idealise and are stuck in their youth. However, this seems to be Larkin’s own opinion as he shares his views on his modern society. However, Duffy expresses it through a persona who is still living in the past. Demonstrating their varied approaches to the idea.

**CANDIDATE 2**

**Ted Hughes: *Poems selected by Simon Armitage* (Faber)**

(*prescribed section: all poems up to and including ‘Rain’ on pages 68-69)*

**Sylvia Plath: *Poems selected by Ted Hughes* (Faber)**

**10.** “Poetry which is too personal teaches us nothing about the wider world.” Explore connections between the ways in which both Hughes and Plath present personal experience, showing how far you agree with this comment. You must analyse in detail **at least two** poems from **each** of your set texts. [60]

Boston-born Plath and Yorkshire-born Hughes were described by Chambers as the most significant “mutually productive pairing of the 20th century.” Plath’s poems often follow the confessional poetry tradition, a term coined by Rosenthal about Robert Lowell, of which he argued “removed the mask” in his poetry. Plath attended several of Lowell’s poetry seminars, reflecting her direct ‘confessional’ inspirations. Plath also met Anne Sexton, commenting that she was inspired by the ‘raw honesty’ of her poetry. As Heather Clarke commented, “the influence of Roberth Lowell and Anne Sexton propelled Plath’s stylistic breakthrough in the Ariel poems”. Plath’s poem ‘Ariel’ displays how poems can be of a personal nature, while relevant to the wider world, as a result of the ‘feminist icon’ role that her poetry became. However, Plath’s poem ‘Poppies in July’ displays how confessional poems can have less application to the wider world. In contrast, the bio-centrism of Ted Hughes’s poetry, in which one critic discussed “he wanted to understand our place in the larger ecology of the world” reflects how Hughes’s personal poems can have a larger impact. Hughes’s poem ‘February’ reflects his passion for shamanising but also how his poems can have a larger application to the wider world. However, Hughes’s poem ‘Pike’ is a poem that lays its foundations in consciousness and memories, and has far less application to the wider world.

‘Ariel’, which a critic labelled as ‘”highly erotic” is a display of personal freedom for Plath. The synaesthesia of the ‘child’s cry melts in the wall’ suggests a level of domesticated freedom. However, the role of ‘Ariel’ as a feminist poem launched its application to the wider world. Ariel, which means God’s lion in Hebrew, makes the gender change to God’s lioness in the poemeven more significant. As ... discussed, Plath founded a ‘style of feminist poetry’. The sibilance of ‘stasis in darkness’ suggesting silence and inaction, juxtaposes with the assurance and internal rhyme of ‘Pour of tor’ to heighten the fluidity of movement, as ... asserted, she ‘reclaims the freedom’. Other meanings of Ariel, such as a horse Plath rode in Devon reassert the personal elements of the poem. While its significance as the genderlessspirit in Shakespeare’s ‘The Tempest’ establishes the larger feminist model the poem became.

In a similar way, the multiple meanings of ‘February’ reflect both personal and universal application for this poem. It suggests the hearts and eintery scenes of the setting. It also recalls the purifying rituals of the ‘...’, a shamanic festival, thus through the allusive power of

a single word, Hughes conveys the ambivalence felt when dealing with wolf energies. The sharp specificity to the sounds of ‘fucked coverlet’ reinforce how Hughes believes recreating of the wolf will never ‘suffice’ the real worlves’ energy. As Ann ... commented’poetry in itslef is a shamanic journey’. Hughes uses the image of a wolf to convey how, in his bio-centric view, the world has ... itself from natural energies. Hughes believed poems had a summoning call which he labelled as the ‘elemental power circuit of the universe’. The rhythmic simplicity of the poem and quantum structure reflects Hughes’s strong assertion of the power of the wolf. To further this, the enjamment propels the reader through the poem in a similar way that Hughes’s passion for wolves has propelled him through his life.

Plath similarly uses enjambment as a reflection of the power of the horse and adrenalin of the newfound freedom. The ‘dark//hooves’ are an image also used in emotional ties to her family. The rhythmically significant stress of the ‘H’ sound emphasises the power of the horse in breaking from this. The personal aspects of the poem thus reinforced, as the poem followed the collapse of her relationship with Hughes. As Perloff reinforces, ‘Ariel is not a death wish, but outrage and vengefulness. This reinforces the personal aspects of the poem. However, combined with the allusion is Godiva, there is a reassertion of wider influences and of feminist power.

Similarly, the wider influences demonstrated by Hughes in ‘February’ convey the poems universal application. Within this , personal influences still remain, as Hughes discussed his passion for wolves, claiming they ‘extended the scope of symbolism from personal to universal applicability.’ The wolf has its ‘mouth clamped’ into the world. The rhythmic thud of ‘clamped’ reinforces the power of the creature, and menacing message that Hughes is conveying. The alliteration ‘well into the world’ that follows has a pleasing fluidity to its tone, thus indicating the ease with which the wolf can assert its energy and presence.

Plath’s poem ‘Poppies in July’ demonstrates deeply personal experiences however doesn’t convey a message to the outside world with the same power as ‘Ariel’. It is a poem of numb lifelines as despite clutching the ‘little poppies’, ‘nothing burns’. The sharp rhythm and quick phrasing reinforce Plath’s masochistic desire for self-harm. This poem that follows the separation from hughes is steeped in the confessional tradition as Rosenthal discussed, she put ‘the speaker herself at the centre of her poetry’. The phrasing of

“A mouth just bloodied

Little black skirts.”

Is aggressive and forceful. This succinct nature of the five syllable line concentrates and releases her anger like the vlow of a fist. The rhythmically significant stress of the ‘s’ sound of ‘skirsts’ enhances Plath’s menace and anger. As … suggested ‘Assia’s presence is felt … but she seems to be contributing to the appearance of the poppies’. This further shows the personal nature of Plath’s writing, that has far less discussion of the wider world.

Hughes conveys personal experiences in a similar manner in his poem ‘Pike’. The foundations for this poem is a memory, that falls into a surreal journey to Hughes’s subconscious. The oxymoronic ‘still splashes’ uses sibilance to convey the dream’like state which Hughes falls into. The hyperbolic simile of ‘as deep as England’ reinforces the poem’s

role as a memory of Hughes’s past through its childlike imagery. As a teenager, Hughes wrote a poem of a ‘sinister fish … in a sinister lair’, thus reinforcing the personal nature of the poem. The pike is described as ‘…the gold’ combining …imagery of elegance and perfection. As …. Discussed, Hughes saw ‘animality as muses to inspire his poetic mood’. The … of ‘Pike’ repeated throughout is suggestive of its powerful presence. … argued that the poem shows how “energy and inspiration came out of darkness” thus reinforcing the personal nature of the poem.

In contrast, Plath’s poem reflects far less energy but more language of disconnect. … discussed her poem reflecting a ‘separation from self’. The synaesthesia of the ‘fumes’ she cannot ‘touch’ portrays this. The rhythmically significant stress if the ‘ing’ sound in ‘during’ and ‘stilling’ further convey Plath’s emotional state. As Plath commented, ‘my poems come immediately out of emotional and sensuous experiences I have.’ Through the sarcastic cries to ‘bleed’or ‘sleep’, Plath further conveys her masochistic desire for self-harm or some form of feeling. The imagery of the ‘flames’ is reminiscent of the bonfire held by Plath upon the discovery of Hughes’s affair, described by Alvarez as a ‘witches ritual bonfire’. As …indicated ‘Plath seems to unfold the truth of mental and emotional suffering.’

‘Pike’ is less a poem of personal suffering but more of a personal inspiration and energy. Both poems demonstrating how poetry can convey a deeply personal experience that provides little relevance to the wider world. The pikes which ‘gloom of their stillness’ are viewed by Hughes as creatives of pure mystery and power. The powerful elongated assonance of ‘gloom’ indicates a looming presence, while the sharp sibilance of ‘stillness’ reflects the predatorial nature of the creature. The reference to the pond of … reinforces the personal aspect of the poem. As Hughes commented in an interview, ‘I would have dreams fill of giant pike’ which were ‘symbols of really deep vital life’. The powerful presence of the final word ‘watching’ reinforces the Pike’s personal connection to Hughes.

Both poets are abe to demonstrate personal and world connection through their poems. ‘Ariel and ‘February’. As Plath argued her poems should not be a ‘mirror looking narcisstic experience’ ‘they should be relevant to the larger things’. Despite this Plath and Hughes also convey poetry of a purely personal nature as ‘Poppies in July’ and ‘Pike’. Hughes discussed ‘Pike’ describing that poetry can be highly personal, and that ‘ancient instincts rise to the surface and refresh us’. Its inspiration of Robert Graves who argued a ‘true poet writes from the wild uncivilised depths of his mind’ is also conveyed through ‘Pike’.

**Marking like an examiner AO2**

**Geoffrey Chaucer: *The Merchant’s Prologue and Tale* (Cambridge)**

1. **(i)** Re-read lines 559–582 from “And ful of joye…” to “…in thy presence.” Analyse

 Chaucer’s use of imagery in this extract. [20]

And ful of joye and blisse is every man, -

Al but a squyer, highte Damyan,

Which carf biforn the knyght ful many a day.

He was so ravysshed on his lady May

That for the verray peyne he was ny wood.

Almoost he swelte and swowned ther he stood,

So soore hath Venus hurt hym with hire brond,

As that she bar it daunsynge in hire hond;

And to his bed he wente hym hastily.

Namoore of hym as at this tyme speke I,

But there I lete hym wepe ynogh and pleyne,

Til fresshe May wol rewen on his peyne.

 O perilous fyr, that in the bedstraw bredeth!

O famulier foo, that his servyce bedeth!

O servant traytour, false hoomly hewe,

Lyk to the naddre in bosom sly untrewe,

God shilde us alle from youre aqueyntaunce!

O Januarie, dronken in plesaunce

In mariage, se how thy Damyan,

Thyn owene squier and thy borne man,

Entendeth for to do thee vileynye.

God graunte thee thyn hoomly fo t'espye!

For in this world nys worse pestilence

Than hoomly foo al day in thy presence.

**CANDIDATE 1**

The imagery in this passage is designed around ideas of passion, loyalty and betrayal. The reference to earthly bliss which opens this section will be important to remember when later in the extract the “nadre in bosom sly untrewe” is introduced to signal the threat to January’s fantasy of paradise.

There is considerable emphasis upon the intimacy between January and Damyan; the squire was Januarie’s “borne man”, brought up in his household and closest of all servants as he “carf beforn the knight”. These images from different parts of the passage serve to emphasise how outrageous the betrayal which is forming in Damyan’s mind really is.

After we have been shown through intense images of sickness and pain that Damyan is a threat to the marriage that is still being celebrated, the Merchant delivers an apostrophe to disloyalty showing through this the deadly dangers of a snake (which is also a traditional image of temptation) and the destructive power of fire in so intimate a place as the “bedstraw” just how potentially deadly a “pestilence” Damyan is and how fickle May might be - for it seems certain she will “rewen on his [Damyan’s] peyne”.

**CANDIDATE 2**

At the beginning of this passage we learn that Damyan performed many duties for January and should be his loyal servant according to the values of medieval society. Damyan however is nearly mad with desire for “fresshe May” and Chaucer uses an image of fire to show that Damyan has been struck and hurt by the passion he feels. Indeed, he is almost fainting at the sight of May’s beauty and he becomes so affected that he has to go to bed as would a person suffering a real illness. Chaucer’s use of fire imagery then changes to show that not only can fire stand for lust and passion but it can also be very destructive as would be the case in a medieval house where straw was used for bedding – a flame brought close to this would be dangerous for a person sleeping unaware and this image is used to show how dangerous Damyan’s feelings will be to January’s marriage.

**CANDIDATE 3**

This passage is taken from a part of the story which comes just after we have seen Januarie at his wedding feast lusting after his new wife and we have seen just how arrogant and deluded Januarie is when he fears that May will not be able to stand the violence of his passion. In this extract the attention shifts to Damyan’s feelings for his new mistress, May which are so intense that Chaucer uses images of sickness to show how he “swelte and swowned” to the extent that he must retire to bed.

To explain his sickness Chaucer personifies passion in the person of the goddess Venus who “has hurt him with hire brond” and later the poet will make further use of fire imagery as he shows that Damyan’s betrayal is as unexpected and as dangerous as “perilous fyr” that “in the bedstraw bredeth”.

**Marking like an examiner Extended Essays**

**CANDIDATE 1**

**Christina Rossetti: *Selected Poems* (Penguin Classics)**

**5. (ii)** Examine the view that “as a devoted Christian, Rossetti’s primary intention in her poetry is to instruct or persuade her readers”. [40]

In many ways, Rosetti’s poetry was intended as a moral guide for readers, often prescribing her religious beliefs as instructions, such as the binary view of life in ‘Amor Mundi’. But Rossetti also conveys, as a devout Christian who rejected men based on their religious belief, that the primary intention of her poetry is to remain personally close to God, not to persuade others of virtues. Rossetti gives the reader both a sense of moral persuasion, but also that being close to God is her main intention of her works.

One way Rossetti does seemingly try to instruct the reader is in ‘Amor Mundi’, where there is a clear sense of right and wrong in life. This is portrayed through the extended metaphor of the path “downhill path is easy”, conveying that there are two paths in life, and one goes to hell, and one to God. The “downhill path”, whilst first described with positive, natural imagery “honey-breathing heather”, the personified heather showing the downhill path as bright and easy, Rossetti portrays this path as leading to Hell, contrasting the positive imagery with death and evil, “A thin and dead body”. This shows how the downhill path, at first the easy route, leads on to death and no reward, shown through the progression of the poem, following the path to its inevitable end. Hell. The metaphor of the path and the dead body as Hell at the end is complemented by the idea of “no turning back”, which prescribes a clear ideology and instruction on Rossetti’s behalf. The binary choice of the up or downhill path, to which there is no “no turning back” confirms the statement that Rossetti instructs her readers to choose the right path, as it is the only way. Rossetti had very strong moral views, seeing the idea for struggle in life as necessary to go to heaven. Roe states that Rossetti explores the “dangers of temptation” which is certainly visible in ‘Amor Mundi’, yet Rossetti goes further than this. There is not just a “danger’ for taking the downhill path but a certain doom, adding the persuasive nature of poem.

Strangely, this was not entirely consistent to her own beliefs, as the premise of the charity work with prostitutes was that people could “turn back” and change, which isn’t shown here, showing maybe that Rossetti was not always convinced of a clear instruction of right and wrong in life.

This complex, less binary expression of the devout religious beliefs is portrayed through ‘Confluents’ where, like ‘Amor Mundi’ Rossetti uses imagery of journeys and paths in life, but shows a less instructional binary view and instead sees all life as a cycle leading back to God. The extended metaphor of the “river”, “rivers seek the sea”, is used similarly to ‘Amor Mundi’ to show a path in life. However, the metaphor of the “seek the sea, much more

deep than they” conveys a different attitude and a less instructional one. The natural imagery of “dew” and “river” perpetuates the message of a natural cycle, and that the “dewdrops find a way” or indeed that all people will return to their creator through the natural cycle of life. The nature imagery is used as a symbolic parallel to humans and reaching God. This is a less persuasive poem, and instead sees a certain inevitability unlike ‘Amor Mundi’ which tries to show the right and wrong in life.

The “dew” is significant as it too is water and as it “leaves not a trace” it evaporates and becomes part of the water again, returning to God. Woolfe notes that Rossetti “saw the world from the same angle”, yet this would say otherwise. Amor Mundi’ and ‘Confluents’ differ in the presentation of paths in life and Rossetti sees life as joining up inevitably to God in the end. ‘Confluents’ meaning to rejoin and connect, a far less instructive view not prescribing a path to take but rather saying we are all on the same path.

This coincides with Rossetti’s beliefs too as a strong Christian. Fundamentally, she saw all people as equal, even saying that “men and women are the same, all one people”. This view shows the reader that Rossetti saw all life with value, and all life as naturally equal and returning to their creator, showing not instruction but embracing the natural cycle. Rossetti arguably saw not persuasion as her main intent but being close to a God. This is seen in ‘They desire a better country’ where Rossetti’s primary goal is reaching God.

The metaphor of “not cast anew the lot once cast” embraces mistakes in life and teaches to embrace them in order to learn and be closer to God. Whilst this could be seen as persuasive as like ‘Amor Mundi’, Rossetti presents two options (to embrace or undo the past) suggesting and instruction not to, and be with God, it could also be argued that Rossetti accepts the past and choices for how they are. The primary intention is therefore, arguably, to be with God.

The metaphor of the “desert” and “golden city walls” convey the idea of an arduous journey leading to heaven, the golden imagery showing value contrasting to the “dry desert” to show reward at the end of a tough journey in life.

Avery says that Rossetti’s “major influence is religion” which is true here, as all three poems retain the idea of being close to God, and how one may get there, “They desire…” shows that Rossetti’s own religious devotion was more important that persuading others with everyone having to make their own journey through the desert to reach God, and her poetry was the main intention to do such.

Overall, whilst Rossetti does persuade in some ways having a clear moral code, the main intention was to be with God. This can be seen by her charity work, rehabilitating prostitutes and coming from a strongly religious family (her sister was a nun) showing that her poetry strives to show that religious devotion is key in life.

**CANDIDATE 2**

**John Donne: *Selected Poems* (Penguin Classics)**

**2(ii)** “Passionate feelings, whether sacred or otherwise, are the driving force of poetry”. In the light of this remark, examine Donne’s presentation of passion. [40]

Passionate feelings can be seen throughout the poetry associated with all stages of Donne’s life. As a Renaissance man, his poems were often passionate as they were risky and pushed the boundaries for the time period of Elizabethan England. However, the poems associated with Donne’s youth tend to have a more physically passionate focus, whilst those associated with his wife Anne are viewed as more profoundly passionate love lyrics. Donne also appears to have passionate feelings spiritually in his conflicting relationship with God, associated with his Holy Sonnets.

Because Donne’s poetry was not intended for the general public but rather a small exclusive audience of friends and lovers (Ilona Bell), Donne was able to show a passion for physical, sexual love that would have been shocking in the context of Protestant Elizabethan England. In ‘Elegy: To His Mistress Going to Bed’, an elegy about soliciting a prostitute, probably associated with Donne’s time as Master of the Revels at Lincoln’s Inn, where he solicited prostitutes, Donne implores his mistress to ‘License my roving hands’. Here, Donne shows passion for the female body, the imperative ‘License’ suggesting that he is almost desperate and begging, whilst the verb ‘roving’ hints at the exploration and discovery of the body that he longs for. This passion for the physical is reinforced by the euphemistic listing of ‘Behind, before, above, between, below’ further hinting at a desire to explore her body ‘everywhere, with a final image of ‘below’ implying the final act of sex. Despite this physical passion for sex, Donne also used his passionate feelings for the physical to almost shame women in more bitter poems such as ‘The Apparition’ in which the narrator, thought to be Donne, haunts a woman that neglected his advances, and even calls her a ‘feigned vestal’, ‘vestal’ suggesting virginity and innocence whilst ‘feigned’ implies an accusatory tone. This suggests a lack of innocence and implies dishonesty. This would have been even more shocking in Elizabethan England which placed importance on the virginity of women, and meant that Victorian publisher Edmund Gosse said ‘It takes courage to print the poetry of Dr John Donne’, in our age as his passionate poems, even those which are passionately physical or bitter contained shocking sexual imagery.

Despite this passion for the physical, Donne’s poetry thought to be written about his wife Anne, who he married in secret, explores a more Neoplatonist concept of physical passion as the lowest rung of the ladder towards spiritual love. ‘The Ecstasy’ explores a love which ‘Interanimates two souls’. ‘Interanimates’ is a positive verb suggesting excitement as well as connectedness, whilst ‘souls’ links this passion for the spiritual connection rather than physical passion. This is reinforced by the metaphor of the ‘abler sound, which hence doth flow’, the metaphor of ‘flow’ showing a positive spiritual connectedness in which the couple take the ‘abler’ or better parts of each other’s souls to complete each other. The passionate

spiritual feelings disregards C. S. Lewis’s claim that ‘Donne’s poetry is too simple to satisfy, its complexity is all on the surface’ as it speaks of a deeper, spiritual passion rather than a perhaps shallow, physical one. This is also seen in ‘Elegy: His Picture’ when despite the narrator departing from his love to go to war (perhaps as Donne had to part from a lover when he went to fight in the British Army), ‘still in my heart where my soul dwells, shall dwell’, the metaphor of the souls together in his heart showing passionate spiritual love that overcomes the physical as they are together despite physical separation. This spiritual profound passion is reinforced by the conceit of physical love as ‘the milk…in love’s childish state’, suggesting weakness and immaturity, which later contrasts with his image that spiritual love is ‘grown strong’ showing strong passionate feelings overcomes the surface level passion for physical appearance and sexual love.

His passionate feelings, presumably for his wife Anne, is also linked with his spiritually passionate feelings with God. Donne appears to have reached the highest level of love on the Neoplatonist Ladder of Love as it was ‘admiring her mind did whet/To seek Thee, God’ (Holy Sonnet XVII). The conceit of her ‘whetting’ his palate or appetite for God showing spiritual progression and further linking with religion as having imagery of a ‘whet’ forehead in christening, implying a spiritual, positive relationship. However, Donne’s passionate feelings are not always positive with God, in fact, ‘the most heterogenous ideas are yoked by violence together’ (Samuel Johnson) in his Holy Sonnets in which he is thought to have been Dean of St Paul’s and he associates his passion for God to harm him with pain.’ He demands God to ‘break, blow, burn’ in Holy Sonnet XIV, the listing of plosive imperatives implying a violent, almost sadistic passion. This is thought to be Donne repenting for the sins of his youth such as frequenting brothels and drunkenness. He even demands God to ‘Divorce’ him from the devil, something near blasphemous in Christian Elizabethan England, as marriage was a sacrament. Breaking a sacrament was sinful is connected with God here, once again showing the profound passion to be rid of sin and forgiven.

To conclude, Donne shows a profound passion for the physical body in poetry associated with his youth at Cambridge University, but this appears to develop to spiritual passion in love poetry throughout to be about Anne, his forbidden love who was the niece of his boss. His sonnets associated with the years preaching as Dean of St Paul’s meant that his passionate feelings are seen in his relationship with God, but he is conflicted. Perhaps this could reflect his inner conflict at betraying the Catholic faith to join the Church of England as he was raised a Catholic.

**Marking like an examiner AO3**

**CANDIDATE 1**

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| Rossetti had very strong moral views, seeing the idea for struggle in life as necessary to go to heaven. Roe states that Rossetti explores the “dangers of temptation” which is certainly visible in ‘Amor Mundi’, yet Rossetti goes further than this. There is not just a “danger’ for taking the downhill path but a certain doom, adding to the persuasive nature of poem. |
|  |
| Strangely, this was not entirely consistent to her own beliefs, as the premise of the charity work with prostitutes was that people could “turn back” and change, which isn’t shown here, showing maybe that Rossetti was not always convinced of a clear instruction of right and wrong in life. |
|  |
| This coincides with Rossetti’s beliefs too as a strong Christian. Fundamentally, she saw all people as equal, even saying that “men and women are the same, all one people”. This view shows the reader that Rossetti saw all life with value, and all life as naturally equal and returning to their creator, showing not instruction but embracing the natural cycle. Rossetti arguably saw not persuasion as her main intent but being close to a God. This is seen in ‘They desire a better country’ where Rossetti’s primary goal is reaching God. |
|  |
| “They desire…” shows that Rossetti’s own religious devotion was more important that persuading others with everyone having to make their own journey through the desert to reach God, and her poetry was the main intention to do such. |
|  |
| Overall, whilst Rossetti does persuade in some ways having a clear moral code, the main intention was to be with God. This can be seen by her charity work, rehabilitating prostitutes and coming from a strongly religious family (her sister was a nun) showing that her poetry strives to show that religious devotion is key in life. |

**CANDIDATE 2**

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| As a Renaissance man, his poems were often passionate as they were risky and pushed the boundaries for the time period of Elizabethan England. |
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| Because Donne’s poetry was not intended for the general public but rather a small exclusive audience of friends and lovers (Ilona Bell), Donne was able to show a passion for physical, sexual love that would have been shocking in the context of Protestant Elizabethan England. |
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| Despite this passion for the physical, Donne’s poetry thought to be written about his wife Anne, who he married in secret, explores a more Neoplatonist concept of physical passion as the lowest rung of the ladder towards spiritual love. |
|  |
| To conclude, Donne shows a profound passion for the physical body in poetry associated with his youth at Cambridge University, but this appears to develop to spiritual passion in love poetry throughout to be about Anne, his forbidden love who was the niece of his boss. His sonnets associated with the years preaching as Dean of St Paul’s meant that his passionate feelings are seen in his relationship with God, but he is conflicted. Perhaps this could reflect his inner conflict at betraying the Catholic faith to join the Church of England as he was raised a Catholic. |

**Marking like an examiner AO5**

**CANDIDATE 1**

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| Rossetti gives the reader both a sense of moral persuasion, but also that being close to God is her main intention of her works. |
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| Rossetti had very strong moral views, seeing the idea for struggle in life as necessary to go to heaven. Roe states that Rossetti explores the “dangers of temptation” which is certainly visible in ‘Amor Mundi’, yet Rossetti goes further than this. There is not just a “danger’ for taking the downhill path but a certain doom, adding to the persuasive nature of poem. |
|  |
| This complex, less binary expression of the devout religious beliefs is portrayed through ‘Confluents’ where, like ‘Amor Mundi’ Rossetti uses imagery of journeys and paths in life, but shows a less instructional binary view and instead sees all life as a cycle leading back to God... This is a less persuasive poem, and instead sees a certain inevitability unlike ‘Amor Mundi’ which tries to show the right and wrong in life. |
|  |
| Woolfe notes that Rossetti “saw the world from the same angle”, yet this would say otherwise. ‘Amor Mundi’ and ‘Confluents’ differ in the presentation of paths in life and Rossetti sees life as joining up inevitably to God in the end. ‘Confluents’ meaning to rejoin and connect, a far less instructive view not prescribing a path to take but rather saying we are all on the same path. |
|  |
| Overall, whilst Rossetti does persuade in some ways having a clear moral code, the main intention was to be with God. This can be seen by her charity work, rehabilitating prostitutes and coming from a strongly religious family (her sister was a nun) showing that her poetry strives to show that religious devotion is key in life. |

**CANDIDATE 2**

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| However, the poems associated with Donne’s youth tend to have a more physically passionate focus, whilst those associated with his wife Anne are viewed as more profoundly passionate love lyrics. Donne also appears to have passionate feelings spiritually in his conflicting relationship with God, associated with his Holy Sonnets. |
|  |
| Despite this physical passion for sex, Donne also used his passionate feelings for the physical to almost shame women in more bitter poems such as ‘The Apparition’ in which the narrator, thought to be Donne, haunts a woman that neglected his advances. |
|  |
| The passionate spiritual feelings disregards C. S. Lewis’s claim that ‘Donne’s poetry is too simple to satisfy, its complexity is all on the surface’ as it speaks of a deeper, spiritual passion rather than a perhaps shallow, physical one. This is also seen in ‘Elegy: His Picture’... |
|  |
| However, Donne’s passionate feelings are not always positive with God, in fact, ‘the most heterogenous ideas are yoked by violence together’ (Samuel Johnson) in his Holy Sonnets in which he is thought to have been Dean of St Paul’s and he associates his passion for God to harm him with pain.’ He demands God to ‘break, blow, burn’ in Holy Sonnet XIV, the listing of plosive imperatives implying a violent, almost sadistic passion. |

**Marking like an examiner Assessing all the AOs**

**CANDIDATE 1**

**Thomas Hardy: *Poems selected by Tom Paulin* (Faber)**

(Poems of the Past and Present, Poems of 1912-13, Moments of Vision)

**T. S. Eliot: *Selected Poems* (Faber)**

(Prufrock and Other Observations, The Waste Land, The Hollow Men, Ariel Poems)

7. “So many of the voices and portraits are those of characters who are adrift in an uncaring world.” In the light of this comment, explore connections between the ways in which Hardy and Eliot present the theme of alienation. You must analyse in detail **at least two** poems from **each** of your set texts. [60]

As poets writing at the turn of the century, in a time of great social change, both Hardy and Eliot present characters ‘adrift’ in a harsh and uncaring Modernist world. Whether it be through social isolation, the absence of meaningful relationships or through the them of death, a deeply personal sense of alienation is starkly prevalent in the whole both Hardy and Eliot’s poetry.

In the section of ‘The Waste Land’ known as ‘The Fire Sermon’, T. S. Eliot creates a profound sense of alienation in the section with the typist and the clerk. Eliot uses a semantic filed of abuse to highlight this such as ‘assaults’, ‘gropes’, ‘undesired’ and ‘patronising’. This implies a distinct lack of emotion and tenderness which sex should provide, therefore creating a sens eof alienation ni the world of the ‘wast land’ where people cannot form functional and emotionally-satisfying relationships. Critics have described ‘The Waste Land’ as a ‘world where human sexuality has been prevented from its natural course’ which indeed consolidates the fact that Eliot presents the typist and the clerk as alienated as the are unable to form a meaningful connection and their sex is abusive. Furthermore, Eliot goes on to describe how the typist is ‘hardly aware of her departed lover’ which again suggests a sense of emotional isolation as t connotes a lack of ability of the typist to properly engage with others. A further sense of iolation is implied by Eliot when he describes how ‘she smooths her hair with automatic hand’. This imagery of robotics and technology implied by ‘automatic’ implies a distinct lack of feeling and an emotional disengagement from the surrounding world. In the Modernist era, may say the rise of technology as a threat to human nature, especially after the First World War. Therfore, the description of ‘automatic’ hand as well as the refernce to the ‘gramophone’ implies that technology plays a part in alienating human beings from this society as well as intesifying the inability of humans to form proper relationships.

In ‘The Voice’, Hardy also creates a sense of a speaker who is alienated due to the lack of a functional relationship and true connection to another human being. For example, the epiphora of ‘call to me, call to me’ evokes an echo which implies an emptiness and absence which is expansive and prevalent in the speaker’s life, creating a sense of alienation. Hardy’s first wife Emma Gifford died the same year that his poem was written and after her death Hardy was overcome with the sense of her loss, which perhaps translates itself into this oem of bleak absence. The dreamy, bleak setting of ‘the breeze’ and ‘the wet mead’ creates a sense of coldness and harshness, implying a speaker which is alienated from the comfort of love. Furthermore, the symbol of the ‘air blue gown’ implies a sense of insubstantiality and ghostliness which intensifies the speaker’s alienation. The gown can be seen as a form of synecdoche; this heightens the sense of alienation as the speaker is so alone that the image of their loved on’s appearance cannot even be described, only their inanimate clothes. An ‘uncaring world’ is certainnly implied here, primarily through the sharp and brutal description of ‘the thorn from norward’. Therefore, both Hardy and Eliot elicit a deeply profound alienation through highlighting the lack of love and tenderness in both speaker’s lives. The direct address used in ‘The Voice’ implies that such alienation is intensely personal whereas the wise figure of Tiresias, from Ovid’s Metamorpheses’ implies a distinct sense of universality to such feelings of isolation.

In ‘Drummer Hodge’, Hardy presents how the brutality of war can render an individual isolated completely from the world. Hardy includes vocabulary from a South African dialect, such as ‘kopje-crest’ and ‘veldt’ to instensify the fact that Drummer Hodge has died in a foreign, alien land, highlighting the fact that he is alienated from the rest of the world. The harsh verb choice of ‘throw’ contrasts the vulnerability implied by ‘young’, thereofre indeed portraying that Drummer Hodge is alienated and alone in a world which Hardy portrays as uncaring. This poem is perhaps a reference to the Boer war which took place in South Africa between 1899 and 1902, as critics have described the poem as ‘a cry of rage from an angry poet who witnessed the suffering of men in a hostile universe’. The verb ‘uncoffined’ highlights the harsh and uncaring world in which Hodge is isolated in, the image of burial intensifying the sense of aloneness. However, the natural and universal imagery at the poem’s conclusion such as ‘southern tree’ and ‘constellations’ imply a sense of peace; although Hodge is isolated in this strange land, he is at one with the serenity of the universe.

In ‘The Love Song of Alfred J Prufrock’, Eliot conveys a strong sense of social isolation to imply the intensity of the speaker’s isolation. Eliot uses synecdoche wuch as ‘long fingers’, ‘the eyes’ and ‘the arms’ to imply a lack of inability to connect with women to the extent that the speaker struggles to conceive them as an entirety. This is further alluded to when Eliot repeats the rhyming couplet of ‘In the room the women come and go/Talking of Michaelangelo’. The rhyming couplet perhaps implies Prufrock’s sense of unity which he cannot have, further evoking a sense of alienation. The monotony of ‘come and go’ implies an ‘uncaring world’ as this, along with the separation of these two lines from the rest of the stanza imply the distance between Prufrock and the woman, thus suggesting his alienation. The repetition of this couplet evokes a sense of ‘frustration...of the modern individual’, as critics have described, as the repetition consolidates the fact that a dead historical figure

can get more female attention that Prufrock himself. Alienation is also strongly conveyed when Eliot describes ‘I sholud have been a pair of ragged claws scuttling across the floors of silent seas’. This imagery of isolation and bleakness is perhaps an indication of the social isoaltion which Prufrock experiences in the harsh, bleak Modernist society. Therefore, both Hardy and Eliot present characters which are adrift in uncaring worlds; whilst Hardy expresses this through the unfamiliarity of South Africa, Eliot alludes to this through the images of monotony of women that ‘talk’ and ‘come’ and ‘go’.

In conclusion, both poets present the intensity with shich one can be alienated by the harsh and uncaring nature of Modernist scoiety, evoking how after the turn of the century, horrors of war, the rise of technology and personal struggles of grief and impotence can all contribute to this feeling.

AO1 – sophisticated, individual, creative (10)

AO2 – perceptive and sophisticated (20)

AO3 – perceptive, productive (10)

AO4 – illuminating where it occurs (9)

AO5 – mature and confident, autonomous reader (10) 59

**CANDIDATE 2**

**Philip Larkin: *The Whitsun Weddings* (Faber)**

**Carol Ann Duffy: *Mean Time* (Picador)**

13. “Unhappiness seems to be the defining characteristic of the modern age.” In the light of this comment, what connections have you found between the ways in which Larkin and Duffy present unhappiness? You must analyse in detail **at least two** poems from **each** of your set texts. [60]

Although writing at different stages of modernity, it has been widely assumed that both Larkin and Duffy explore the same niche in the respective eras. Through Larking’s ‘Mr Bleaney’ and Duffy’s ‘Room’ there is an overwhelming exploration of unhappiness in the modern age as both poets explore the isolation and lack of fulfilment which dominates the poems and modern life. However, although ‘Here’ by Larkin and ‘Prayer’ by Duffy are fundamentally about hardships in the modern age, unhappiness in these poems is multi-faceted and perhaps even comforting.

‘Mr Bleaney’ by Larkin explores the unfullfilling and often bleak nature of every-day modern life. The regular ABAB rhyme cheme and structure of seven four line stanzas could perhaps reflect this unsatisfactory mundanity which Larkin loathes so intensely. The character of Mr Bleaney is perhaps a metaphor for what Larkin does not wish to become, ‘I lie where Mr Bleaney lay’ and ‘stub my fags on the same saucer-souvenier’ emphasising the parallels between their unhappy lives. The sibilance of ‘stub’, ‘same saucer’ here emphasises this bleak mundanity, furthermore explored by the colloquial ‘fags’ which creates an unsatisfactory atmosphere. The listing of ‘bed’, upright chair, sixty-watt bulb’, ‘no hook’ uses random household onjects to show the deprived nature of Mr Bleaney’s existence, his ‘preference for sauce to gravy’ perhaps mocking the habitual, meaningless existence of the working class, an example of Larkin’s ‘snobbery’. The pathetic fallacy of ‘the frigid wind tousling the clouds’ could metaphorically represent the fear Larkin feels that he will become like Mr Bleaney as the weather is threatening. Larkin then ‘zooms’ into a philosophical statement as ‘how we measure our own existence’, a bleak and direct reminder of how unhappiness and dissatisfaction affects our lives, the ening on the hopeless admission ‘I don’t know’ prehaps reflective of Larkin’s lack of certainty in life and even his lack of hope.

Duffy similarly explores the unhappiness of life in ‘Room’ which like ‘Mr Bleaney’ uses bleak domesticity to highlight the innate lack of satisfaction life gives. Similar to Larkin, Duffy creates a sense of emptiness through the frequent references to household items such as ‘one chair to sit in’, ‘no curtains’ and ‘one second hand bed’. This reflects an advertisement but ironically lacks appeal, perhaps reflective of how life is bleak and hopeless. This hopelessness is fruther reflected in ‘the giftless moon’ which implies life offers nothing but a ‘cat passing on a wall’. This explicitly colloquial language mirrors Larkin’s and perhaps indicates the harsh reality of how existence is often unhappy, exemplified through the metaphor of ‘a cool lightbulb waiting for a moth’ which suggests life is enticing, yet only

results in disappointment and death which is supported through the dark semantic field of suffering, a ‘hard silence’ dominating the room. The poem ends with a caesura and ‘£90pw.’ which may reflect Duffy’s agitation with the unhappy nature of existence or a mocking of consumerism which adds to the bleakness of post-war modern age’ which Larkin can also relate to. Thus Duffy presents unahppiness as fundamental to existence in a modern age, as like Larkin in ‘Mr Bleaney’, it is all encompassing.

Yet, ‘Here’ offers a completely different exploration of unhappiness or dissatisfaction in a modern age.. Fundamentally a poem on isolation, it is anything but bleak and does not allow unhappiness to manifest as unhappiness. The juxtaposition of industrial imagery of ‘shadows and traffic’ and ‘spires and cranes’ with the natural imagery of ‘skies, scarecrows, hares and pheasants’ perhaps indicates a divide in modern age which can often deel alienating and unsatisfactory. Larkin critiques consumerism through ‘residents from raw estates’ and a listing of consumer items perhaps indicative of his post-war affluence, ‘red kitchen ware, sharp shoes, iced lollies’. This mindless repetition of goods indicates a lack of satisfaction in moders age, and derogatory language to describe the working class such as ‘simple’ and ‘fishy-smelling’ and ‘grim’ creates a critical, cynical tone which suggests unhappiness and lack of purpose. Yet, the train journey ends at an unknown ‘here’ where ‘silence stands like heat’, a metaphor perhaps representative of the overwhelming sense of isolation which can feel oppressive yet beyond this, there is hope. ‘Here is unfenced existence’ implies that there is hope to be found in solitude, and in nature, and that the modern age is not simply defined by unhappiness.

 Like Larkin’s ‘Here’, Duffy explores the ways in which the modern age, despite its unhappiness cannot be said to be hopeless or entirely unsatisfactory. The title ‘prayer’ may reflect Duffy’s own Ctholoic upbrinnging. The imabic pentametr of this poem reflects a prayer too, despite its reflection upon existence, indicative of how modern life is not always defined by unhappiness. The natural iagery onf ‘humans sung by a tree’ perhaps reflects how the natural world provides comfort or ‘a sudden gift’ in times of need. Thus, Duffy uses the universality of existence in modern life to highlight how prayer can be found on the seemingly unsatisfactory such as the ‘Latin chanting on a train’ or ‘grade 1 piano scales’ which are common secular experiences many can relate to in modern life, yet still find comfort in despite ‘loss’ and ‘darkness inside’, ‘Pray for us now’’ mirrirs the volta in the Catholic Hail Mary, which again indicates how comfort can be found in both religious and secular experiences even the shipping forecast of ‘Rockall. Malin. Dogger. Finisterre’ which is seemingly mundane. This, like Larkin in ‘Here’, Duffy accepts that although at times life can be ‘unhappy’ in the modern age, it can also ‘console’us and does not entirely lack hope.

In essence, despite both poets acknowledging how bleak and unsatisfactory life can be in the modern age, they do not necessarily suggest that his defines our existence. While consumerism, death and suffering can often times feel hopeless, there is an awareness from both poets that life is not empty of joy, nor is it defined by unhappiness as comfort can be found in the universality of human existence.

AO1 – clearly informed, engaged and well-organised (8)

AO2 – sound analysis; secure support (14)

AO3 – uneven, generally clear grasp (6)

AO4 – purposeful at times (7)

AO5 – some clear and appropriate (6)

41