**GCE English Language and Literature Component 3**

**Section B(i)**

**Example 1**

Capote presents Mrs Clutter as being ‘a timid, pious, delicate girl.’ The syndetic list implies that Bonnie Clutter has many attributes, and could suggest she is complicated and of a confused mind. The tripling of adjectives show how she has many ‘layers’ to her and the adjective ‘timid’ implies her introverted personality. Capote then goes on to describe Bonnie’s health and that she ‘was nervous’ and ‘suffered little spells’. We know as readers that Bonnie Clutter had mental health issues but in the 1950’s this will have been covered up and seen as a ‘taboo’ subject. We see this as Mr Clutter belittles the topic of his wife’s health by saying she has ‘little spells’ – implying her episodes aren’t a cause for concern and the noun ‘spells’ suggesting they are somewhat magical or ‘fairy-like’.

(*This candidate did not discuss the rest of the second paragraph, in which it is suggested that Mrs Clutter’s health problems are physical rather than mental*)

**Example 2**

In the metaphor ‘sunlight had very lately sparkled’, the noun ‘sunlight’ represents joy and happiness. The noun phrase ‘this shadowed terrain’ also reinforces the idea that Bonnie’s illness is lingering over the family and is something that they cannot escape. Furthermore, this presents the imperfections within the Clutter family. The asyndetic list of noun phrases ‘the tensions, the withdrawals, the pillow-muted sobbing’ emphasises a repetitive routine of discomfort that the family have to deal with behind closed doors. Moreover, although Capote presents the Clutter family as perfect on the outside, contrasting this with the difficult family dynamics he is presenting the Clutter family overall, as genuine and realistic.

**Example 3**

Finally, Mrs Clutter is not presented as a typical female character, and therefore is not a motherly role within the family of the Clutters. This could be suggested when it says ‘the tension, the withdrawals, the pillow-muted sobbing behind locked doors, all due to an out-of-order backbone?’ This could suggest that Mrs Clutter is not a motherly figure within the family and the use of the asyndetic list reinforces that. The use of the rhetorical question ‘all due to an out-of-order backbone?’ could suggest that Mr Clutter is unable to believe Mrs Clutter when she suggests this. The use of ‘behind locked doors’ could be a hidden meaning within the family, that even though everyone in Kansas wants to have a family like the Clutters, nobody knows what is happening behind closed doors.

*From the mark scheme (2019)*

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| **Q5 (i)** | **Use integrated linguistic and literary approaches to examine how Truman Capote presents the Clutter family in this extract. [24]** |
| **AO1** | Candidates should use coherent written expression within their response.  Candidates should apply relevant literary and linguistic terminology in their analysis.  Some literary and linguistic features that candidates may choose to explore include, but are not limited to:   * adjectival phrase ‘Always certain’ to describe Mr Clutter’s outlook * noun phrase ‘what remained of a finger once mangled by a piece of farm machinery’ * noun phrase ‘a plain gold band’ to symbolise the Clutters’ marriage * asyndetic listing in noun phrase describing Bonnie: ‘a timid, pious, delicate girl’ * comparative ‘three years younger’ * noun phrase ‘a sizeable Thanksgiving reunion’ * quantifier ‘fifty-odd kinfolk’ to illustrate size of extended family * parenthesis ‘of whom her father very much approved’ to describe Beverly’s fiancé * noun phrase ‘the town darling’ to describe Nancy * euphemisms ‘nervous and ‘little spells’ to describe Bonnie’s mental health * metaphor ‘shadowed terrain’/’sunlight’ * rhetorical question beginning ‘Was it possible…’ * noun phrase with religious connotations ‘a blessing of unmarred gratitude’. |
| **AO2** | Candidates should select appropriate supporting evidence from the text and apply relevant literary and linguistic terminology in their analysis.  **Look for and reward all valid interpretations.**   * extract begins to establish the author’s and society’s impressions of the Clutter family. * candidates might take the view that, by describing Herb Clutter first, Capote is presenting him as very much at the head of the family and its dominant figure. * some might suggest that the mention of Mr Clutter’s injured finger symbolises his commitment to hard physical work, with the ‘plain gold band’ suggesting a modest, unshowy nature in addition to being a signifier of a long and stable marriage. description of the rest of the Clutter family reinforces the idea that they are an ideal, almost perfect family – for example, even though Eveanna, the eldest daughter, has moved away and has a family of her own, she still ‘visited Holcomb frequently’. * the ‘Thanksgiving reunion’ of ‘fifty-odd kinfolk’ also implies that there is a large extended family (‘the Clutter clan’), some of whom are prepared to travel long distances, illustrating the closeness of the wider family and also Herb and Bonnie’s organisational skills and hospitality, further reinforced by the mention of the forthcoming wedding. * overall impression created by the first paragraph is that the Clutters are an example of the perfect American family, embodying the ‘American Dream’. * second paragraph mitigates this somewhat with the reference to Bonnie’s mental health but even here there is a suggestion that the situation is improving, through Capote’s use of the metaphor of ‘sunlight’ on ‘shadowed terrain’: if the health issue is physical rather than mental then it can easily be rectified and there will be nothing to spoil Herb Clutter’s ‘unmarred gratitude,’ a noun phrase underlining the significance of the family’s religious beliefs. |

**Section B: Context**

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| **PERSIA** | **SPECIFIC CONTEXTUAL POINT / KEY EPISODE FROM TEXT** |
| ***Political***   * Laws / Acts relevant to topic * Government / Politics |  |
| ***Economic***   * Attitudes towards wealth and poverty * Jobs and income * Crime and punishment * Wealth and poverty/inequalities |  |
| ***Religious*** (if relevant)   * Writer’s personal beliefs * Attitudes towards religion in society |  |
| ***Social***   * Gender/ attitudes towards sex * Family structure * Living conditions |  |
| ***Individual***   * Relevant biographical details of the writer: their life, influences on them, circumstances of producing the text |  |
| ***Artistic*** (if relevant)   * Genre * Literary movements * Key literary figures of the time |  |