

Comprehension - Mark Scheme

- 1) Bob squinted because the 'door flew open and harsh artificial light flooded the tiny room.' (1) By 'harsh artificial light' the author means that the room all of a sudden would be too bright and so Bob squinted to 'defend himself from the accursed light.' (1)
- 2) c) Technically. (1) 'Elegantly', 'stylishly' and 'delicately' are all synonyms of 'gracefully' as each of these words indicates beauty of form in performance.
- 3) The word 'assaulted' is a vividly violent, highly negative word which is commonly used to refer to physical attack. (1) As such the use of this word shocks the reader and helps us understand how striking and startling this light was, counteracting typical initial assumptions of light being harmless. (1) (1 mark for any analysis of the word 'assaulted' which supports a negative tone. 1 mark for an appropriate comment on how this affects the reader. Max 2 marks in total.)
- 4) Given the woman being described as 'rail-thin,' acting 'calmly' and how this is evidently meant to contrast with 'the brute,' we might assume that primly means any of the following: elegant, correct, proper, polite, formal etc. (1)
(Accept any word or statement that suggests behaviour in a trained, proper manner)
- 5) Simile: 'thick-rim glasses clinging to his head like moss to a cliffside.' (1) The detailed imagery here allows us to picture just how firmly rooted the man's glasses were to his face, and makes them a part of his identity, since the reader can visualise how tightly attached moss is to rock. (1)
Metaphor: 'His angry grey eyes bore holes into the timid office worker's skull.' (1) This vivid imagery highlights how piercing and menacing the man's stare was, to have such an effect as to appear to drill holes into Bob's skull. (1) OR 'with the base of a rockslide' (1) which again uses imagery of vast numbers of rocks tumbling to allow us to picture his rumbling sound being generated. (1) OR 'with the pride of a lion' (1) which uses the comparison of his voice to that of a strong, majestic animal to allow us to appreciate the strength in his speech. (1) Interestingly a group of lions is called 'a pride' and so the author may be using double-entendre (i.e. making a pun) to put even more character and strength into the man's voice. (1)
(1 mark for identifying the simile. 1 mark for appropriate corresponding analysis as to the effect that it has. 1 mark for identifying a metaphor. 1 mark for appropriate corresponding analysis as to the effect that it has. Max 4 marks in total.)
- 6) Bob was confused and disoriented, as he was 'struggling to make out who, or what had assaulted his senses.' (1) Bob was afraid, as he was gripped by 'fear and uncertainty.' (1) Bob felt as if he was in danger, shown when he was 'attempting to defend himself from the accursed light.' (1) This is further reinforced when Bob realised that 'he was not going to enjoy what was coming,' as he is full of dread as to what may be in store for him. (1) His fear is further evident by his vigilance - for example he is portrayed to be looking for 'a good look at the first intruder.' (1)
(1 mark for each description of how Bob may feel that is supported by a suitable quotation, adjective or piece of analysis of the text. Max 4 marks in total.)
- 7) These lines are written in an unusual way. They describe Bob's sensations before they describe the slap itself - we are only told about what has happened towards the end of the paragraph. (1) This means that at first the reader is confused as to what is happening, which is much like the confusion and startle that Bob would have been experiencing while this was occurring. (1) The author focuses on the timing and the stinging sensation on Bob's cheek when the reveal occurs (1) which draws attention to the power of the slap and the confusion it caused. (1) The use of short sentences at the end of the paragraph (1) further creates a tense, stunned atmosphere as it throws the reader off. (1) A rhetorical question is used at the very end (1) which conveys Bob's confusion by changing the tone to an inquisitive one. (1)
(Max 2 marks for commentary on the sentence structure, sentence order, choice of vocabulary or any other appropriate features of how this paragraph is written. Max 2 marks for appropriate corresponding analysis of how each mimics Bob's experience of the events. Max 3 marks in total.)
- 8) Where one interrogator is described to 'stomp around the desk,' the other is said to have 'calmly strode to the opposite side of the desk.' (1) The difference in language used to describe the way each character walks highlights differences in their attitude, with one being much violent and the other being much more graceful. (1) The voice of the larger character was 'imbued with the bass of a rock slide and the pride of a lion,' whereas that of the lady was 'a melodious whisper.' (1) Whereas the larger character is loud, the lady is made to seem as if her speech is a soft and quiet. (1) Other comparisons to be drawn could relate to build, a 'dark blob materialised into tall bulky man' compared to the 'rail-thin woman.' (1) Finally, the actions of the two characters varies in aggression, with 'the bulky man' who 'delivered a vicious slap' contrasting the gentle woman who 'was smoothing out the creases of her skirt.' (1)
(Max 2 marks for any valid comparisons made between the two intruders. Max 2 marks for appropriate corresponding quotations supporting these comparisons. Max 4 marks in total.)

Writing Task - Exemplar Response

The abandoned mansion loomed gloomily at the top of the hill. I had walked past it every day for almost two years on my way to school, but the boredom of these long summer months compelled me to finally visit it. I approached it tentatively, appreciating how it must have been truly majestic in its prime. Two cracked marble columns framed the grand, mahogany door like a picture frame. I uncertainly placed my trembling palm on the large brass doorknob that was firmly embedded into the centre of the imposing door, and gave a strong push. The door gave way, revealing what lay behind it.

Ahead of me lay a grandiose, spiral staircase in the centre of the entrance hall. Ivy had entwined itself into the banister and delicate metal detailing on the staircase. I treaded softly along the cracked, grey marble floor that was probably once white. The rubber soles of my shoes made no noise as I negotiated the rubble strewn across the ground, tiptoeing quietly so as to not be heard. On either side of the high-ceilinged entrance hall were stained-glass windows; despite being covered in a thick blanket of dust, I could still appreciate the deep reds, blue and green light that filtered through the glass.

I walked past the staircase rather than up it, due to the fact that many stairs had now been replaced by emptiness, and to go up it would probably be too treacherous. Through a door on my left I saw what clearly used to be a cinema room. Two velvet curtains clung desperately to the ceiling on either side of the screen, and the maroon-coloured leather reclining chairs were full of wrinkles. I walked further on, and reached the kitchen. A kitchen island with a porcelain sink stood in the middle of what was obviously a family kitchen. Idyllic pictures of a family long forgotten occupied every spare space in the kitchen. The cupboards were fully stocked with glasses, plates, bowls and cutlery. The dining table was fully set, as if dinner was about to be served. The entire mansion appeared to be frozen in time, making me wonder what forced this family to leave their lavish home so suddenly. Walking past the abandoned mansion now no longer filled me with fear as it used to, but with a profound sadness.