GCSE
ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 1 Explorations in creative reading and writing

Marking guidance

Maximum mark: 80

Use best fit to select the band and the mark. Credit valid alternative readings supported by the text.

Question 01 [4 marks]

Read again the first part of the source, from lines 1 to 6. Answer all parts of this question. Choose one answer for each question.

Correct answers: 01.1: Four; 01.2: Canvas; 01.3: Bread-and-butter; 01.4: She blushes.. Award one mark for each correct selection. If an item has more than one uncancelled selection, award no mark for that item.

All answers are explicit in lines 1-6.

Question 02 [8 marks]

How does the writer use language here to show Laura's admiration for the workman?

Lines 43-46: the closely observed sequence of gestures gives the man's enjoyment of lavender an unhurried, attentive quality. Laura's response is immediate and changes the focus of her thoughts. Explain the effects of the selection and emphasis.

Lines 46-48: repeated reference to caring, the rhetorical question and the exclamatory judgement can convey surprise and growing enthusiasm. Her thoughts are brought close to the reader rather than reported at a distance.

Lines 48-50: the contrast between the workmen and the boys she normally meets can idealise the new acquaintance. Strong answers may explore the extent to which admiration exceeds what she can actually know about him.

Use the four 2-mark AO2 bands by best fit. Reward precise explanation of language effects rather than naming devices alone. Credit other supported readings from these lines.

Marks	Description
0	Nothing relevant to the question.
1-2	Simple, relevant comment with a reference or example; effects may be asserted rather than explained.
3-4	Some explanation of relevant choices and effects, supported by appropriate examples.
5-6	Clear, developed explanation of how the writing achieves the specified effect, using well-selected references.
7-8	Perceptive, detailed analysis of choices and their effects, supported by precise, judicious references.

Question 03 [8 marks]

You now need to think about the structure of the source as a whole. This text comes from near the beginning of a short story. How has the writer structured the text to create a growing sense of ease for Laura?

Lines 1-9 begin with an awkward approach and an unsuccessful attempt to sound adult. This establishes the discomfort that will change.

Lines 10-17 introduce a friendly response and move into Laura's increasingly positive thoughts. The shift from outward performance towards her private reactions draws us closer to her changing experience.

Lines 18-41 develop a practical exchange, including disagreement and hesitation over where the marquee belongs. These interruptions keep the change from feeling wholly smooth.

Lines 42-50 narrow the focus to the workman's small gesture and expand Laura's enthusiasm into imagined friendship. Lines 51-59 then broaden into her thoughts about social conventions and end with a physical action that contrasts with her embarrassment about food at the beginning.

Explain the effects of sequence, shifts of focus, pace or viewpoint in relation to this one effect. Word-level analysis alone does not answer the structural question. Use the four 2-mark AO2 bands by best fit and credit other supported interpretations.

Marks	Description
0	Nothing relevant to the question.
1-2	Simple, relevant comment with a reference or example; effects may be asserted rather than explained.
3-4	Some explanation of relevant choices and effects, supported by appropriate examples.
5-6	Clear, developed explanation of how the writing achieves the specified effect, using well-selected references.
7-8	Perceptive, detailed analysis of choices and their effects, supported by precise, judicious references.

Question 04 [20 marks]

For this question focus on the later part of the source, from line 42 to the end. In this part of the source, Laura imagines becoming friends with the workmen. Her enthusiasm seems genuine, but her belief that she now understands their lives seems rather naïve. To what extent do you agree and/or disagree with this statement?

A response can agree, disagree or qualify the statement. There is no preferred position. A convincing answer distinguishes the sincerity of Laura's feeling from what she can reasonably know after a brief encounter.

Lines 43-50: Laura notices appreciation of nature and imagines friendship. The close presentation of her questions and excited thoughts can make her warmth convincing while leaving room to question how quickly she generalises.

Lines 51-54: her confident rejection of social distinctions follows a short experience. The emphatic insistence can be read as conviction, self-persuasion or both; explain how the writing shapes that judgement.

Lines 54-59: sounds of shared work and the exchange between men appear friendly to her. Eating her food becomes a deliberate sign of belonging. The closing comparison with a work-girl may reveal a gap between feeling at ease and understanding other people's working lives.

Credit a supported argument that she is open-minded rather than naïve, or that her new understanding is limited but still meaningful. Use the four 5-mark AO4 bands by best fit, evaluating how methods support the judgement rather than counting quotations or techniques.

Marks	Description
0	Nothing relevant to the question.
1-5	A simple judgement with limited textual support; little explanation of how the writing shapes the response.
6-10	Some supported evaluation, with some explanation of relevant writing choices.
11-15	Clear, sustained evaluation of the statement, with developed explanation of methods and well-selected references.
16-20	Convincing, perceptive evaluation of the statement, with detailed consideration of methods and judicious evidence.

Question 05 [40 marks]

A local magazine is inviting entries for a creative writing competition. Choose one of the options below for your entry.

Mark the chosen response independently of Section A. It need not retell the source or use its characters. Treat the two options as equally valid.

AO5 (24 marks): judge the effectiveness of communication for the chosen description or narrative opening; appropriateness and control of tone, viewpoint and vocabulary; development of selected details; and purposeful organisation. Do not require a complete plot for the narrative opening.

AO6 (16 marks): judge sentence control and variety, grammar, punctuation and spelling separately from AO5. Reward accuracy and deliberate variation, not a count of unusual words or techniques.

Use the original practice band summaries below as indicative guidance and moderate against the current official writing criteria. This guide has not been standardised by AQA.

AO5

Marks	Description
0	No relevant response.
1-6	Simple communication with limited development or organisation.
7-12	Some successful communication and development, with some organisation and appropriate choices.

Marks	Description
13-18	Clear, effective and developed communication, with controlled organisation and vocabulary.
19-24	Compelling, convincing communication, developed detail and assured, purposeful organisation and language.

AO6

Marks	Description
0	No creditable technical control.
1-4	Limited control of sentences, grammar, spelling and punctuation.
5-8	Some secure control, with some sentence variety; errors remain evident.
9-12	Generally accurate and controlled sentences, grammar, spelling and punctuation, with effective variety.
13-16	Consistently secure, deliberate control of varied sentence structures, grammar, spelling and punctuation.

Katherine Mansfield, The Garden Party (1922).