

Paper 1 – Passages

Question 1

- 1 The following text is taken from an account of the writer’s experience of extreme weather in Vietnam, in South East Asia.
- (a) Comment on the ways in which language and style are used to convey the impact of the weather and people’s reactions to it. [15]
- (b) The writer produces another account of extreme weather (real or imaginary) in a different part of the world.

Write a section of this account (between 120–150 words). Base your answer closely on the style and features of the original extract. [10]

Mornings in Vietnam in the rainy season: I must remember to push the mattress up on its side when I get up, before doing anything else. If not, it becomes heavier and heavier with moisture, the pungent stink of mildew¹ pinching my nose at night.

In the rainy season, everything I do is a strategy for coping with the damp chill and the water. I didn’t grow up here. The water infiltrates my consciousness. I learn to accept it, like the others around me, to see it as a minor disruption. 5

In the rainy season, I must remember to keep my showers to a few minutes, no matter how good it feels to have the water pounding my back, soothing away the chill. The water slowly seeps through the cement between the shower stall and bedroom, impregnates the wall, a sheen of tiny droplets over my bed. Another thing to remember: never leave the pillows propped up against the wall. 10

In the rainy season, I mustn’t boil water for tea or cook anything that produces too much steam, adding to the weight of moisture hanging in the air. The excess humidity settles: a visible mist upon the clothes hanging in my closet, turning them into a new life form, furry and spotted. Every surface a wick for moisture. 15

In the rainy season, I am thankful that my home is in this neighbourhood, this alley, so much higher than the main road. While the rich sleep in their attics, or on their roofs, the swirling, muddy water laps at my door sill, but doesn’t enter.

I grab my umbrella and head out for breakfast. I push open the waterlogged left panel of my carved wooden door. My umbrella mushrooms out with a snap and a dull whomp, displacing water-filled air. Rain sheets down from our red tiled roof. 20

My nephew, radiant in his purple rain poncho, a canary yellow motorcycle helmet pushed down over the hood, stands under the eaves, rain rat-a-tat-tatting down from the roof onto the helmet. A duet with the drumming rain on my umbrella. Pausing a moment in the ankle-deep water, we listen to the call-and-response rhythm we make together. He laughs a great belly-laugh and roars off on his motorbike, the water a tall rooster-tail behind him. 25

Looking at the world from under my rose-coloured umbrella, I wade down the alley with its gold walls, under grey skies and green leaves. The lane falls to meet the road. The water rises to my knees, threatens my jeans, rolled up thigh-high. Each step an eternity, pushing against the flow, my toes seeking the edge of the sidewalk. Stepping out into the main road triggers a memory from the year before: this corner

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is where the pavement dips into a pothole, where I twisted an ankle under the murky water.

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I can't see my feet, or even my knees. The Perfume River, not knowing its boundaries, or refusing to have any, overflows the banks, invades the road and climbs the steps of shops and homes.

In the rainy season, instead of my usual coffee and soup on the bank of the river, I head for the very back of a restaurant I never set foot in during good weather. The tables near the front are prone to the fine mist that kicks up from the water-skimmed entrance, pummelled by the onslaught of rain. I'm lucky to find an empty seat. Waiting for breakfast, I watch the river swelling over the road, up the three steps and into the crowded restaurant.

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Inhaling the aroma of bitter coffee, I watch boys swimming and casting their fishing lines, shouting and laughing in the river that used to be the road. A group of teens cycles past, four abreast, wearing purple and pink ponchos. Laughing, pushing at the pedals, they move in slow motion, tires submerged. One of them struggles but cannot avoid a branch drifting into his path.

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Across from the restaurant, several tourists raise their cameras to snap souvenirs of a small girl hugging her wiry dog on the roof of her home. Down the road the water is higher; another dog stands on the hood of a taxi, barking at the water as it rises, lapping over the hood.

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Awaiting my food, I peer through the breakfast bustle to watch the tourists point their cameras at the rising river and the falling rain. They laugh and curse and squeal as the water soaks their pant legs, rolled up to their crotches, giving them a bowlegged gait² as they enter the restaurant in squelching shoes.

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After breakfast, I venture out of the shelter of the restaurant and back into the flood, the chill soaking into my bones. Bits of flotsam—a plastic water bottle, a piece of someone's front door—bob against me as I struggle against the current until I reach my alley. I wonder if this is the year the water will rise up my walls.

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¹ *mildew*: damp mould

² *gait*: way of walking

Mark scheme

Part (a) – Commentary (maximum 15 marks)

	Mark	Knowledge & Understanding	Analysis of language effects	Organisation
Band 1	13–15	Perceptive appreciation of content and ideas. Fluidly relates content to structure, audience, purpose, genre, style; shows keen awareness of intentions of passage.	Analyses text with sensitive and discriminating awareness of how language creates effects. Moves with ease between part and whole in discussing specific examples of language use and the effect of the whole passage.	Strong structure; may be concise; quotation is used fluently, ‘embedded’ in the argument.
Band 2	10–12	Shows consistent appreciation of content and ideas. Able to relate content to structure, audience, purpose, genre, style, main aims of passage.	Analyses text, with awareness of the effects created. Able to relate part to whole in discussing specific examples of language use and the effect of the whole passage.	Strong structure used to convey clear argument.
Band 3	8–9	Shows steady engagement with content/ideas of piece. Shows general understanding of structure, audience, purpose, genre, style of passage.	Thorough analysis of passage is made, correctly identifying a range of features of language, giving examples, and showing ability to explain how they create effects with some relation of part to whole.	Clear structure, sustained focus.
Band 4	6–7	Shows some engagement with content/ideas of piece. Shows general, overall understanding of structure, audience, purpose, genre, style of passage.	Appropriate points are made, correctly identifying some features of language use, giving examples, and showing some ability to explain how they create effects. May be a fragmented approach.	Clear structure; may be line-by-line; essay may drift in and out of focus.
Band 5	3–5	Makes some relevant points about content. Shows some understanding of some aspects of the structure, audience, purpose, genre, style of passage; with some failures to identify key features and or misunderstanding.	Some relevant points made, identifying a restricted range of examples of language use. Some examples are not related to the effects created. Some examples may be listed without development; much generalisation.	Little structure; points may be rather disconnected.
Band 6	0–2	Comments on content of passage; may be confused.	One or two points made about language of passage. May be unclear.	Expression breaks down at times. Very short work. Unstructured.

Part (b): Directed writing task (maximum 10 marks)**Marks**

8–10	<p>A perceptive recognition of context, audience and purpose supported by a good range of appropriate vocabulary and expression suitable for the task.</p> <p>Responses at the top of this band will be persuasive and confident, supported by a consistent, and at best personal, engagement with context and purpose, using fluent and accurate expression accompanied by a strong sense of audience.</p>
6–7	<p>A clear and informed sense of purpose, context and relevance supported by a reasonable attempt to use language appropriate for the task.</p>
4–5	<p>An adequate attempt but marked by an inconsistent and uneven sense of purpose, context and style.</p> <p>Generally sound expression and accuracy.</p>
2–3	<p>The beginnings of an answer, but limited by an inappropriate sense of style, purpose and language.</p> <p>Expression and accuracy may be limited.</p>
0–1	<p>Confused and unfocused sense of purpose, context and audience. Wholly inappropriate language and style.</p> <p>Work may be brief or fragmented and expression very limited.</p>

Example candidate response – grade A

1.	a)	<p>The purpose of the text is for the writer to express what has become a routine for him in dealing with the extreme weather in Vietnam as well as the way other people are affected by it. This is shown by the repetition of the phrase "in the rainy season" at the beginning of several paragraphs before expressing all the chores and responsibilities the writer "must" do. This creates the effect of a list of chores to be followed precisely, due to the use of the verb "must", suggesting in order to cope with the weather suggesting a sense of routine.</p> <p>First of all, the writer uses several personifications for water "muddy water leaps at my door sill, but doesn't enter". This was suggests the negative perspective of the water as it is kept out of the house. The writer also uses the personification "The Perfume River ... invades the road and climbs the steps of shops and homes". The use of the strong verb "invades" creates the sense of an enemy approaching slowly. This expresses the writer's contempt with the water, making it seem as the negative character of a story. It shows the way the others, the rest of the citizens of Vietnam, are badly badly affected by the weather and cannot stop the water from entering their homes the way the writer does.</p> <p>Secondly, the writer shows the different perspectives on the way other people cope with the rain suggesting a more positive light. His nephew seen is described as being unaffected by the extreme weather. He is "radiant" standing out in the dull weather with his "purple rain poncho" and "yellow motorcycle helmet". The use of the colours contrasting rest with the rest of the monotonous mood created due to the effect of the routine. Not only that, but in the same paragraph the writer focuses on the sounds by using the use of onomatopoeias "rat-a-tat-tatting" "drumming rain". The excess use of sound effects standing out from the rest of the text as well making</p>
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Example candidate response – grade A continued

		<p>this specific paragraph more lively and providing a more positive approach. This This proves that his nephew's reaction to the rain is different than his seeming unaffected by the what would be a depressing weather as he "laughs a great belly-laugh".</p> <p>As the writer leaves his home the mood changes as he is no longer in control, leaves his routine, and is now an observer of the way the world is affected by the water. The water is now an enemy "threatens my jeans". However, not everyone sees it that way. Children are described as "swimming", "shouting", "laughing" suggesting their innocence and the way they don't see the water as threatening as the writer does. Tourists are suggested to be unaware of the into dangers of the weather and as they "laugh and curse and squeal", as the sound effects creating a false sense of cheery mood as they do not have to experience this weather every year like the writer does. Not only that but they "snap souvenirs" the assurance ^{alliteration} and the verb "snap" creating a negative view of the tourists as they seem to enjoy a helpless, little girl's misfortune.</p> <p>The writer concludes the account with a personal thought "I wonder if this is the year the water will rise up my walls creating a sense of fear and uncertainty for the future leaving the so audience on edge, not knowing what will happen." F</p>
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Example candidate response – grade A continued

b)	<p>Mornings in Romania during the winter: I must remember to put more than one alarm clock in order to wake up for I cannot rely on the sun to enlighten ^{if} my days anymore. I wake up in complete darkness hearing nothing but the screaming wind threatening to ^{tear} tear my house apart.</p> <p>During the winter, the warmth of the blankets lulls me back to sleep trying to ^{protect} prevent me from the snow's ice claws.</p> <p>During the winter, I must remember to put on layers upon layers of clothes to shield me before leaving the house to shield me from the wind's deathly strikes. Another thing to remember: never leave without gloves.</p> <p>During the winter, I must drink at least one cup of hot beverage to keep the blood in my veins flowing and under ^{any} any circumstances at all I mustn't open the windows and invite the blizzard in.</p>
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Examiner comment – grade A

- (a) The candidate immediately demonstrates an understanding of the purpose of the passage and highlights the repetitive use of the phrase 'In the rainy season'. They also understand the effect of the writer's language choices in creating the sense of a necessary routine in the struggle against the encroaching water. This might also have been a good point to consider the writer's almost fatalistic tone when discussing these counter measures, who is plainly not convinced that they'll make much difference. The response then moves to a more detailed focus upon the various personifications of the surrounding waters; the effectiveness of the word 'invades' in giving a malign and determined character to the river is well understood. The candidate's informed grasp of the structure of the passage is also shown by their recognition of the change of tone signalled by the arrival of the 'radiant' nephew, who ushers in an acceptance, even an enjoyment, of the conditions. The writer's use of onomatopoeic language might have been more fully examined but its general effect is well noted. The change in the writer's status from flood victim to an observer of others is a very good point and is well developed in the observation of the children, who actually enjoy the flood. A strong understanding of tonal changes is a feature of the answer and this is maintained in the final paragraph, which has a clear recognition of the writer's returning anxiety about what next year's rainy season will bring.

Mark awarded = 13 out of 15

- (b) The candidate clearly understands the usefulness of a repetitive phrase to define both the setting and the season for the reader. This is quite neatly done with the opening 'Mornings in Romania during the winter'. The need to devise a routine to combat the weather is understood and the original's yearning for comfort in the face of the elements is replicated; the 'snow's ice claws' is a clever echo of the personified flood. There is some rather awkward phrasing in places; nevertheless, this response has caught the tone and style of the original and transposed it effectively to a fresh setting.

Mark awarded = 9 out of 10

Total mark awarded = 22 out of 25

Example candidate response – grade C

1.	a.	<p>The piece is written in first person and is the narrator's account of the torrential rain and way of life in Vietnam in rainy season. The purpose of the piece is to bring to the attention of the reader the situation faced by the inhabitants during this time but also to entertain the reader.</p> <p>The writer uses a structure of writing which uses concise, short & medium length sentences mostly. The use of short sentences throughout the piece allows for a faster pace which alludes to the frantic nature of life during the rainy season here. The piece comprises of 14 short paragraphs, which causes the reader to make pauses inbetween them as the writer cycles through ideas, giving the piece the feel of a prologue or a manifesto with multiple short, precise 'instructions', allowing the reader to understand that the inhabitants here face this environmental attack year-on-year and that the way in which they deal with the saturated moisture and flood water is second-nature to them. When the writer leaves the house in line 20, the sentence length increases, allowing the read to become slower. Coinciding with this change is the shift in emphasis from "the moisture hanging in the air" to "on the deep water" on the streets, with the writer describing the toil and effort required to wade through the stream of water on the road; the change in sentence length mirrors this change, further allowing the reader to appreciate the nature of movement required in such conditions.</p> <p>The writer begins the piece with a statement and elaborates thereafter, the use of punctuation aids in creating a feeling of unease and stop-start motion in her surroundings by the use of many commas to separate short sentences (lines 15-20).</p>
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Example candidate response – grade C continued

		<p>The coupling effect of the short sentences and punctuation allow for the piece to feel like an extract from a survival diary or documentary book, with the reader back to feel the hostile environment being dealt with by the narrator.</p>
		<p>The writer uses many linguistic techniques in the piece; the use of specific adjectives such as 'pungent, stink, damp, sootling, sheen' etc constantly en enforce the writer's feeling that the air is st saturated with moisture and makes life unpleasant, as the reader constantly comes across words relating to water in a negative connotation such as 'chill, seeps, water-logged, threatened, murky, pumelled'. The writer also used a number of onomatopoeic words throughout the piece; 'snap' and 'dull whomp' in line 21; 'rat-a-tatting' in line 24, 'squeel' in line 56, 'squelching' in line 57, all further enrich the reader's immersion into the story as the writer attempts the reader to be immersed and involved in understanding the situation.</p>
		<p>The piece is contrasted between the imminent danger faced by the writer as she 'wonders if the water will rise up her walls' and is grateful that she lives in a place where the water won't flood her house (which alerts the reader to the dangerous side of this weather) and the flashes of colour and joyful activities still present during the rainy season; the use of colour-imagery in 'rose-coloured umbrella, purple poncho, purple and pink ponchos, canary yellow helmet, red tiled roof, gold walls, green leaves, grey skies' all add to vivid imagery and allows the reader to feel that the situation isn't all doom-and-gloom; there is still life that goes on here.</p>

Example candidate response – grade C continued

		<p>The contrast is also present in the nature of activities described; 'wading, coping, infiltrates' etc are contrasted by more lively, pleasant images later on in the piece such as fishing, swimming, laughing and hugging, further allowing for a situation of mixed emotion and feeling to develop for the reader.</p> <p>The audience of this piece would be relatively well educated and interested in travel. The tone of the piece is informal but professional, there is an absence of slang or colloquial language but the diction choices are familiar and relatable as not to distance the reader and writer in order to create an atmosphere of intrigue, sympathy and understanding of the actions necessary and the situation faced by the people of Vietnam during rainy season. (740 words).</p>
50.	b.	<p>Zimbabwean summer; the heat of midday scorches the ground as the sun spotlights down. I remember to wear my wide sun-hat and bask myself in sunblock. If not, I will burn fast and blister like a ripe tomato over an open flame.</p>
90.		<p>The reprieve expected with the setting of the sun comes as a disappointment, it sets late, the day is long, and the heat penetrates the night. Mosquitoes in their millions, hungry for blood, make sure that sleep is only a luxury on the plains of tharare.</p>
140.		<p>Cloudless skies give no hope of cooling rain; aquamarine blue usually connotative of cool, ironically, looks barren and well-baked. Clouds appear, the sky is black, rumbling like a starving belly, and then, with sheer cruelty, disappear without lending the dry, dry earth without a single drop. ...</p>

Examiner comment – grade C

- (a)** This response has a weak opening paragraph which simply states what is obvious to the reader and adds no extra insight concerning language or content. However, the second paragraph quickly establishes a consistent focus upon the structure of the passage and the language features employed. The reference to the use of short sentences might have been clearer but the choice of the word 'manifesto' gives perfect definition to the author's catalogue of preparation. The candidate recognises the use of punctuation to create a sense of 'stop-start' motion and the writer's inability to ever feel at ease in his surroundings. The response would have gained from attention to the repetitive phrase 'In the rainy season', which acts as a mournful chorus in the opening paragraphs. There is some confusion over nouns and adjectives but there are also effective word lists to demonstrate the insistently water related language. The use of onomatopoeic language is understood and the choice of the word 'immersion' to describe the effect on the reader is exactly right. More might have been made of the arrival of the 'radiant' nephew, but the transforming effect of the colour references is well conveyed. There is good understanding too, of the aspects of contrast employed by the writer and of his ambivalent attitude towards his surroundings. The concluding paragraph of the response has some of the weaknesses of the opening: identifying the target audience as 'well educated' and 'interested in travel' does not usefully examine the style and tone of the passage. Although there are some omissions from this response, there is also a secure understanding of the purpose and key features of the passage.

Mark awarded = 9 out of 15

- (b)** This response takes the question at its word and writes about genuinely extreme weather conditions. The opening words set the scene immediately and make a decisive reference to the original. There is also evidence of precise and effective word selection in the opening paragraph: the sun 'spotlights' down and the candidate 'bastes' himself in sunblock. There are also clever echoes of the original's tone in the second paragraph, particularly in the weather's active hostility to the writer. The candidate also picks up on the colour imagery in the original : 'the black sky' which fails to produce the longed for rain, is particularly effective. There are mistakes, but this a purposeful response with some well-chosen vocabulary.

Mark awarded = 6 out of 10

Total mark awarded = 15 out of 25

Example candidate response – grade E

1	a	<p>The purpose of the text is to share information about the rainy season in Vietnam, the text is written in a general way, as so, it is able to attract a wide range of audience. The text is written in first person point of view throughout so that the it is more personal and intimate unique to the author only, the audience will find the text more relatable.</p> <p>The first few paragraphs^{after first paragraph} started with 'In the rainy season' to show that rainy season had play a significant role in the author's life. 'I must remember' as The phrase 'before doing anything else' also suggest that rainy season had affected him in a way that he has to prioritize preventing his mattress getting soiled by the rain. In the second paragraphs 'everything I do is a strategy' and, 'infiltrates' ^{and} 'disruption' suggest that he/she has a str dislikes the rainy season. 'Infiltrates' was used to describe water as unwelcomed by the writer.</p> <p>'I must' and 'I mustn't' are used repetitively, it ^{shows} gives a sense that the writer has to remind him/herself of a lot of things while coping with rainy days, for example he/she must remember to 'push the mattress', 'keep his/her showers to a few minute' and 'not to boil water', however he separate they are separated to a paragraph for each 'must' or 'mustn't' so that readers could see his/her reason for not doing why he has to do or not do certain thing.</p> <p>The mood of the journal is quite gloomy, ^{as} almost everything that happens during rainy was negative described negatively by the author writer. In paragraph four, 'a new life form' is used to exaggerate what happened ^{excessive} if moisture enters his/her house, it is used to describe how his/her clothes will look totally different and unrecognizable.</p>
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Example candidate response – grade E continued

		<p>^{excess} If moisture enters. In paragraph 5, the writer is 'thankful' even though muddy water leaps at the door sill, which give reader an idea that something it could be worse than just mud ^{water} in front of the his house.</p> <p>While the first five paragraphs are more descriptive and explanatory, the paragraphs afterwards (six to the end) is written in a narrative. The writer starts to recall a morning he ^{the} spent on a rainy rainy season. He described many colours of many items, which suggest that he ^{the} still vividly remember the event ('red tiled', 'canary yellow', 'rose coloured', the 'purple')</p> <p>The writer also uses several figure of speech such as onomatopoeia in 'rat-a-tat-tatting' and to describe sound of the rain, which from his story makes him/her more relatable and closer to the audience, he also uses hyperbole in 'each step an eternity' to suggest that it takes a very long time to walk in the muddy water, and he ^{the} did not enjoy it. After meeting his/her cousin, the author mood When meeting his/her cousin, the writer's create a slightly more positive and happy mood compared to a passage, using words such as 'radiant' and 'belly-laugh'.</p> <p>In line 36, Postume River was ^{is} described as 'not knowing its boundary', suggesting that the river overflow and had invaded pedestrian's road. The word 'refusing' has a negative connotation as it means that the overflowing of river is unwanted by people. The author also loses many enjoyments in his/her life thanks to the rainy season as he/she could no longer sit in his usual restaurant, which he does not like as he 'never set foot' in it during other other seasons, which can also suggest that the restaurant was ^{was} not as good as the ones by river bank. However 'I'm lucky to find an empty seat' suggest that otherwise, as the restaurant is is full of</p>
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Example candidate response – grade E continued

		<p>people. It could also mean that people are desperate for restaurants as the one by the river can no longer operate.</p> <p>lastly, the</p> <p>The phrase 'chill soaking in my bones' suggest that he/she was terrified by the things bobbing against him/her. Commas are used to list down those things 'plastic water bottle, a piece of someone's front door' which give a sense of inventory. The rainy season was described in an extreme way as it causes a bad flood and people were still trying to have activity outside such as eating in restaurant, and even to having tourism activity as 'tourists raise their camera' suggested. lastly,</p> <p>The last sentence 'I wonder if this is the year the water will rise up my walls' give creates an effect of uncertainty of the flood will get worse. The After reading at the text, and there ^{readers} might sympathize the writer and situation in Vietnam during rainy day season.</p>
1	b	<p>Winter nights in the Toronto can be really unbearable sometimes, I must wear layers and layers of clothes which greatly hinder my movement, I might still feel the cold chilling my spine and crushing my bones, but, my body will also have natural reaction of sweating, which will cause me me to think in embarrassment.</p> <p>In winter nights, sun will set really late, sometimes, the ^{sky} will still be bright as lamp at 10 pm. At nights like these, it tend to be harder for me to fall asleep, insomnia strike. when I</p> <p>In winter nights, my hair will be damp when I arrived home and transportation is inaccessible.</p> <p>I dotted myself, checking mirror if I had put on my eyeliners properly for the last time before I head out. All my effort will be a waste though, as I have to cover myself ^{cover myself}</p>
105		<p>I eat thick winterbreaker with winter clothes and caps and muffer</p> <p>in thick winter clothes and muffer, I hate winter.</p>

Examiner comment – grade E

- (a) The opening paragraph of this response attempts to give some definition to the passage but needed to be far more specific in its reference. To say that a text is written 'in a general way' isn't very helpful and a 'personal' style isn't necessarily more appealing to the reader. The candidate does comment on the repetitive use of 'In the rainy season' but might have said more about its effect. There is also attention to the word 'infiltrates' but without specifying the precise effects of language choice. The repetitive use of the injunctions 'I must' and 'I mustn't' is recognised as a linguistic device but again, might have been more fully developed. This is also the case with the use of onomatopoeic language which needed a more developed explanation. The candidate recognises the change of tone created by the arrival of the writer's nephew and also comments on the implication of the river 'invading' the roads. There is some broad understanding of the passage but only a relatively limited range of examples that are related to specific effects. Style and tone are also quite generally discussed but would have benefited from more precisely chosen language.

Mark awarded = 8 out of 15

- (b) The candidate is quite successful in building up the sense of accumulated misery that the weather creates: 'chilling my spine and crushing my bones'. There is also an effective use of the repeated phrase 'In winter nights' to establish setting and season. However, the response is weakened by a series of mistakes and omissions which prevent it from being fully effective. There is a tendency to omit both the definite and indefinite article and there are mistakes with word endings. There is also a change of tense in the final paragraph which spoils what might have been an effective conclusion. The emphatic final sentence 'I hate winter' shows some purpose in the response but this needed to be assisted by more accurate expression.

Mark awarded = 4 out of 10

Total mark awarded = 12 out of 25