**Structure of Literature Paper:**

**ENGLISH HL 7 June 2025**

**GRADE 12 LITERATURE : POETRY REVISION POEM 4-6**

**Poetry**

**Question 1** – Poetry Essay Question

Structure – Paragraphs

Introduction – Brief reference – Topic

**Focus – Diction – Quote ,Imagery, Tone, Structure and Theme**

**Question 2-4** -Contextual Questions

Choose ANY 2 Poems

**Question 5** -Unseen Poem - Compulsory

**POEM 1 -Sonnet 130 Shakespeare**

**Structure** “Sonnet 130” consists of 14 lines. It is a **traditional English love sonnet**, which is divided into three quatrains and a concluding heroic couplet in the end

**Poetic Devices** :

There are various uses of **alliteration and assonance** in the poem. Look at the repetition of “w” sound in lines 3- 4, “g” in line 11, for example.

Repetition occurs in lines 2 (“red”) and 4 (“wires”). This, again, emphasises the importance of the colour and texture – the idealised Petrarchan woman had blood-red lips and golden, luscious hair.

**Anastrophe** (the natural order of words is inversed) occurs in lines 6 and 7: “But no such roses see I in her cheeks / And in some perfumes is there more delight”

**Hyperbole** abounds in the poem – all of the comparisons are exaggerated.

Poet – **not cynical but realistic**. Ridicules Petrarchan poets

Three quatrains– contains **8 anti-compliments**

**Tone** : **Quatrains – Sarcastic** **Rhyming Couplet(Volta) – Sincere**

**Theme : Realist love unlike exaggerated comparisons found in traditional Petrarchan poems**

**Themes:**

**Escape from Idealism** — Shakespeare does not idealise his beloved. She is unlike the Petrarchan ideal — she is "real" and he loves her despite her imperfections. He states clearly in the couplet that people who describe their partners with idealised comparisons, are liars This emphasises the **absurdity of Idealism**.

**Femininity** — This sonnet addresses the problem of **stereotyping female** beauty by setting **unreachable standards** for it. The fixed definition of beauty is unrealistic and will make females inferior by not achieving the ideal standards of beauty. He questions real love - we should love our partners in spite of their imperfections.

**Love**— The speaker expresses his love for his beloved. He describes his value of love. He states that real love is not based on outwards appearances and idealised looks His **Love is based on connection and emotion, not the superficial**. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

**Question 1: Essay**

In ***Sonnet 130 – My Mistress’ Eyes***, the speaker satires conventional views on love and beauty. With close reference to diction, imagery and tone, discuss the validity of this statement in relation to the poem. Your response should be in the form of a well-constructed essay of 250-300 words (about 1 page).

**TOTAL :10 Marks**

**Suggested Answer for Question 1 : Essay**

The following are points that could be included in in your essay:

Sonnet 130 is to challenge those poets during Shakespeare’s time, who used **hyperbole** when describing those they loved.

Shakespeare is making fun of the **clichés** of love poetry. He **satirises** the concept of ideal beauty and the use of hyperbole in describing a lover.

In the first twelve lines he is almost **insulting** about the fact that his lover does not meet these standards of beauty, he does this by the **repetition** of “not” when comparing her: that her "eyes are nothing like the sun" her breath "reeks" - **satirises the conventional use of extreme praise**.

Other poets might suggest she speaks like music, her skin is snow-white, that she is a "goddess".

His **tone** here is **mocking/ teasing/ playful.**

In doing this he shows how **unrealistic the conventional metaphors** are, he finds a way of undermining these by saying:

* Instead of **perfume,** her **breath** "reeks".
* Her skin is not **"snow" white, but "dun" coloured**.
* Her **cheeks** are not pink like roses.
* **Anastrophe** (the natural order of words is inversed) occurs in lines 6 and 7: “But no such roses see I in her cheeks /And in some perfumes is there more delight”

In the last two lines his tone changes and he is more adoring/ loving/ full of praise towards her.

Although she is not a "goddess" he still cares for her.

In fact, **he thinks that she is more beautiful than any of the women** who are written about using unbelievable metaphors.

**Couplet** – **Volta**- turn of thought/perspective -true love is not dependent on physical appearance.

He is showing that being **honest is more a demonstration of true love.**

To exaggerate would be to use "false compare" and to tell lies about his love - who is "as rare" as any of the women who have inspired such adoration.

1. Explain how the **structure and tone** of this poem allows the poet to emphasise the central
2. message. (3)

*(The Shakespearean/Elizabethan sonnet consists of 3 quatrains and rhyming couplet. The* ***quatrains*** *deliver his exaggerated* ***anti-compliments****, and the couplet drives home his* ***sincere love*** *– he loves her* ***despite her imperfections****. The tone in the quatrains – sarcastic/sardonic/frank. Tone in couplet – sincere.*

1. Are Shakespeare’s observations in the **quatrains cynical or not**? Explain your answer. (2)

*(No – no mark.* ***Women, like men, are not perfect****. He is* ***not cynical, he is realistic****. He loves her* ***despite her shortcomings/imperfections. She is real!)***

1. Who is the speaker **ridiculing in the poem**? Why does he do this? (3)

*(He ridicules the* ***Petrarchan poets of the time*** *who used exaggerations to describe their lovers. He proves that the idealised woman does not exist AND makes it clear that his beloved does not have to be perfect for him to love her genuinely.)*

1. Explain what is meant by**:“** *My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground*. (2)

*(She is* ***REAL – she does not float above the ground****, as described by Petrarchan sonnets, she walks. She is human, not an idealised and* ***mythical goddess****.)*

1. Refer to line 12. Comment on the **effect pace** has on the meaning of the line. (3)

*(The pace* ***slows down with commas*** *and* ***monosyllabic words****. It indicates the heavy treading/walking of his mistress’ gait. She walks like a normal person, she* ***doesn’t float like a goddess.)***

1. Show how the **last line completes his argument**. Refer, in particular, to the word “false”. (2)

(*(He* ***does not need to make false/untrue/exaggerated comparisons*** *to let her know he loves her. Or to love her!)*

1. Identify **three sensory images** in this poem and how they relate to the central theme. (3)

*(****Sight – he sees her features****;* ***touch – her ‘wiry’ hair; smell*** *– her breath;* ***hearing – her voice****. Learners must quote and explain. All relate to the* ***theme of her imperfections*** *making her ‘perfect’ in his eyes. She does not fit the mould of the idealised Petrarchan woman. She is real)*

1. Identify the **tone in lines 1-12** and how this **contrasts with the tone in the last two lines.** Is this an effective shift in tone? Justify your answer. (3)

***Tone in 1-12: sardonic, sarcastic*, *critical****.* ***Last two lines: sincere,*** *heartfelt. Effective shift – he states very clearly what she is NOT and then says that he loves her DESPITE her imperfections.)*

1. Explain the use of “**by heaven**” in line 13. Why has this phrase been included? (2)

*(It is a* ***reference to God*** *– he swears by the* ***Almighty to prove his sincerity****.)*

**POEM 2-The child who was shot dead… APARTHEID Ingrid Jonker**

**Structure** -This poem consists of four stanzas and ends with a **one-line coda**.”***Without a pass***”

The first three stanzas contain five lines each and the fourth stanza has seven lines.

**Third person narrative**

**Free verse** (lines with no prescribed pattern or structure)

**Poetic Devices:**

**Paradox** – “the child is not dead”

**Irony** – “without a pass” – Last line

**Metaphors – Lines 1,3,4,5,16,22**

**Anaphora**: The speaker repeats the phrase **“the child”** throughout the poem.

The speaker also repeats the phrases “is not dead” in stanzas 1 & 3, “lifts his fist against his...” in stanzas (**Generational Gap**)1 & 2, & “who shouts Afrika! Shouts the breath” in stanzas 1&2

**Synecdoche** – **Child** represent the **youth**

**Allusion** – Stanza 3 ***“The child is not dead”*** -Biblical Allusion

**Protest poem - Apartheid**

The **youngster is a symbol of the growing sense of freedom** in South Africans' hearts against Apartheid, and this piece highlights his death at Nyanga during the anti-pass march.

**Tone – Unrelenting/Bold/Determined**

**Theme – Brutality of apartheid and innocent lives lost through systemic violence**

**Tone :**

The **tone** in the poem is bold**, passionate, inspired and determined**. Despite the sadness about the innocent child’s death, the tone is not sympathetic or sad. There is a sense of outrage and loss. The speaker remains determined in his/her message and relays it with a clarity of purpose.

**Mood :**

**Hostile/ Unrelenting**

**Themes:**

**Freedom** – **ultimately the speaker dreams of a time when all people will be free. This freedom includes the freedom of speech, movement and in all human rights**. Freedom from Apartheid and its brutal laws.

**Resistance** – This child stands up for what he knows it right and **he (the symbol) can never die. He is not a physical person, but an idea.** There is resistance against the blatant brutality and barbarism against the innocents. His raised fist symbolises the yearning for freedom, identity, and protest.

**ESSAY QUESTION**

*The title of Jonker’s poem creates an expectation of a dead child. However, the contents of the poem contradict the title.* In an essay of 250-300 words, discuss how this is done paying special attention to diction, tone and imagery

**Suggested Answer for Question A: Essay**

**Diction**

The title of the poem states that ‘the child is dead’o The first line of the poem contradicts this by stating that ‘the child is not dead’. o It portrays that the child is still alive by using double negatives. This line also contains a metaphor.

The sense of freedom is compared to a “child”, growing inside one’s mind.o Terms such as “fists”, “freedom”, “blood” and “scream” are meant for infusing the spirit of nationalism.

In this poem “The child who was shot dead by soldiers in Nyanga” begins with an allusion. The first line “The child is not dead” alludes to the fact that the poet refutes the death of the child. o According to the poet, their children cannot die. o They are still alive in their hearts an in the fight for justice and freedom.

“The child is not dead”: Firstly, the child is a symbol of the growing sense of freedom in the South African’s hearts against the Apartheid system.

The comparison is made between a ‘child’ to a thought of freedom.

The poet tries to convey that the child died physically, but he is still alive in her heart and the hearts of the Africans.

The third stanza begins with a repetition of the first line that acts as a refrain. It is meant for the sake of emphasizing the idea concerning the child’s death.

He is not dead. o The armed forces cannot kill him or others like him present in the coloured townships such as Langa, Nyanga, Orlando, and Philippi, fighting against injustice.

**Imagery**

**Visual Imagery:** In the first two stanzas, the poet uses the image of a child who raises his fists to show his resistance towards apartheid.

**Organic Imagery:** Throughout this poem, the poet uses this imagery to infuse her anger in readers’ minds. After reading the lines such as “where he lies with a bullet in his head” readers feel angry and at the same time sorry for the innocent child.

**Tone**

In the first three stanzas of the poem, the **tone is firm**, and it highlights the fact that even an innocent child understood the value of freedom and equality.

Hence, through the poet’s voice, the spirit of the child screams out to his countrymen to end their suffering by standing together for the sake of saving other children like him.

1. Comment on the reference to ‘the child’ in the title of the poem. (2)

*(It evokes* ***a sympathetic response****. A child is* ***vulnerable and helpless*** *against the* ***armed soldiers****. It shows the cruelty and senselessness of this death – this child* ***did not live long enough to realise his potential.)***

1. The title refers to the ‘dead’ child, yet in line 1 ‘the child is not dead’. Discuss the contradiction/dichotomy by referring to the rest of the poem. (3)

*(The* ***contradiction/dichotomy*** *leaves the reader pondering: how can the child be both dead and “not dead”? The child is* ***physically dead*** *but the speaker introduces the idea that the* ***child is a symbol*** *of* ***innocence/hope/resistance****. None of the lives lost will be forgotten, as they are ‘everywhere’. They will be remembered in history in the struggle for freedom. The child will always be present to drive the struggle and ultimately reap the rewards of freedom by travelling ‘without a pass’.)*

1. What does the altered repetition of “The child lifts his fists against his mother / father” reveal about the generation gap that is reflected in responding to the laws of apartheid? (2)

*(The child is unhappy with the* ***parents’ submissive attitude*** *– they did not fight hard enough. He (as* ***a synecdoche of the youth****) will now* ***take up the fight, literally****. The child seeks a quick and possibly* ***violent solution*** *to the end of Apartheid as he* ***‘lifts his fists’****; whereas the protests of his parents would have been more peaceful as previous ‘generations who are shouting Afrika’ campaigned against Apartheid in this way. The youth is filled with rage at the Apartheid world they are forced to inhabit, the legacy of previous generations who ‘allowed’ matters to reach this intolerable point. Active and passive resistance)*

1. How does the diction in stanzas 1 and 2 highlight the difference between mothers and fathers? (3)

*(The image of the* ***mother refers to pain and suffering*** *– they* ***“scream****” and their screams of* ***anguish*** *are heard far and wide. The image of the* ***father*** *refers to* ***warriors and pride****. It refers to* ***“justice and blood”*** *– the call to arms to regain their lost pride.)*

1. Comment on the effect of the denials in the third stanza. (2)

*(The frequent use of denials and negatives* ***emphasises just how frequently these events*** *occurred during those brutal years in the fight for freedom. The reader understands that there are innocent victims in all these places, and the denials – indicative of officialdom – come across as* ***blatant lies.)***

1. Critically comment how the imagery used in lines 20-23 contributes to the mood. (3**)**

*(The child playing in the sun creates a* ***carefree mood without the violence*** *of ‘bullets’ and ‘rifles’ and ‘batons’. ‘****Treks’ and ‘travels’ suggest freedom*** *and no more restrictions and confinements of ‘pass’ laws. The image of a* ***‘giant’*** *show that the* ***child is now grown and has embraced his potential****. This contributes to a* ***mood of hope, optimism and confidence****.)*

1. Discuss the effectiveness of the last, short line of the poem. (2)

*(The concluding image is particularly* ***poignant*** *because it reflects a child who did not want any part of the violence he grew up in but instead wanted to* ***follow innocent pursuits****. He wanted the opportunity to become an* ***independent adult with no restrictions*** *on where he could go. The* ***pass book*** *implies* ***restrictions and oppression****.)*

1. During the Parliamentary address, Nelson Mandela commented that “in the midst of despair, Jonker celebrated hope.” Does this poem celebrate hope? Discuss your answer briefly. (3)

*(Jonker remained desperately* ***hopeful of a better future****. The last line implies a future without restrictions. The repetition of* ***“Not dead” implies hope and optimism.)***

1. “The child” is repeated ten times in the poem. How does this repetition add meaning to the poem? (2)

*(The repetition emphasises the* ***age and innocence of the child****. The effect is to highlight the* ***number of innocent people who were killed*** *in the fight against Apartheid.)*

**POEM 3- At a Funeral APARTHEID Dennis Brutus**

The poem's title makes it appear as though **Valencia Majombozi is being honored.**

It also deals with the **disappointment of unfulfilled dreams**;

Valencia passed away **before she could begin her career as a doctor**, and her family had made considerable sacrifices to help her finish medical school. All for nothing,.

\* The **funeral service is seen as "empty"** (just **for show**) and a "pageant" in light of the woman's and her family's broken expectations and dreams. By equating the burial to those whose lives are being crushed by the oppression, he expands on this concept.

**Form / Structure:**

\* This poem has a precise rhyme pattern **(aaabab, cccdcd)** and two equal stanzas.

The **formal procedures and customs** of a funeral ceremony are mirrored in the **formality of the poem**.

**Poetic Devices:**

**Personification**appears in lines 2 and 6.**(Graves** expecting their content; hungry mud) – the earth seems hostile. **Death is personified – Grim Reaper**

The use of varying capital letters emphasizes and attracts attention to the words.

The **exclamation points "Salute!" and "Arise!" imply intense feelings** and a call to action.

People who are oppressed cannot fully live their life! He calls for active opposition, "Arise!" He concludes by saying that **choosing death is preferable to submitting to "defeat and death**".

**Pun** - Plots

**Tone- Melancholic - Defiant**

**Themes: Defiance oppression, political , call to arms**

**Tone**

* Stanza 1 – Calm and Reverent
* Stanza 2 – Anger & Contemptuous

**Mood:**

Stanza 1- melancholic (sad)

Stanza 2 - vengeful

**Themes:**

* Criticises oppression.
* Call to arms: people should get up and fight
* Frustrated and aborted hopes
* Years of Sacrifice that end in nothing
* Aborted Hopes
* The fight against injustice
* Desire for freedom
* Human Sacrifice for a cause

**QUESTION 1**

*In the poem ‘At a Funeral”, the poet depicts his desire to honour the legacy of those who have sacrificed their lives in their fight for freedom and calls for decisive action against the incessant oppression by the structures of apartheid.* With close reference to diction, imagery and tone, critically discuss the validity of this statement. Your response should take the form of a well-constructed essay of 250–300 words (about ONE page).

**Suggested Answer for Question 1: Essay**

Use the following points, among others, as a guideline to answering this question.

* In this poem, the poet pays tribute to a young lady, Valencia Majombozi, who was killed by apartheid forces during the Sharpeville massacre while protesting against the oppressive Pass Laws.
* The poet depicts the rich array of colour that adorned the funeral ceremony. The funeral ceremony is dignified with an elaborate display of colour(‘pageantry’), of a fallen hero who was killed while fighting for her freedom. This bears testimony to the poet’s respect for the deceased who symbolises the powerful resilient spirit of young people who stood firm in their opposition to oppressive laws during the apartheid regime.
* In stanza1, there is a rich medley of colour from the ‘black, green and gold’ which represents the flag of the resistance movement to the colleagues of this doctor who attended her funeral wearing their university robes "In bride'-white, nun 's-white veils."
* Also, the nurses wore cloaks which are lined with bright red (the "red-wine."). Other nurses at the funeral wore white, which echo the nuns in their habits "In bride'-white, nun 's-white veils."
* The poet mourns the loss of a young person who had enormous talent and potential which have now gone to waste. She has become a symbol of resistance to the harsh apartheid laws that restricted the freedom of black people in South Africa. Throughout stanza 1, there is a melancholic mood as the poet joins the other mourners in paying their respects to the deceased.
* The tone in stanza 1 is calm and reverent which is in keeping with the poet’s admiration for the deceased.
* However, in stanza 2, there is a huge shift in tone as the poet makes a strong political statement and renews his commitment to the fight for freedom in South Africa. His tone is commanding(‘Arise’), angry (‘enraged’) and contemptuous (‘carrion books of death’) i.e. the Pass laws which dictated the lives of black people and restricted their freedom of movement.
* The poet stresses that humans were reduced to dead flesh (‘carrion). From the moment of birth, a black person was given this Pass Book, so that they would cease to be human beings from the point of birth. Thus, they would become ‘carrion’ or dead flesh. This ties in with the notion of abortion.
* The symbolism of "death's-head tyranny" is reminiscent of the power of the Nazis in Germany who were extremely powerful in destroying their opposition. Their army tanks that rolled through the streets of Berlin with the insignia of skull and crossbones was cheered wildly by their supporters. The poet suggests that similar methods were employed by the apartheid regime to suppress opposition to their policies. The poet’s experience of political repression and his opposition to apartheid impart force and breadth to his poetry.
* The final line of the poem “Better that we should die, than we should lie down” is ominous as the poet is motivated by the deaths of all those who have sacrificed their lives in the struggle against apartheid. He honours the bravery of those who have fought selflessly against the injustices perpetrated by the apartheid regime which was responsible for the destruction of lives/dreams/hopes of people.

1. To what does “pageantry” refer in line 1? Discuss the effectiveness of this choice of word. (2)

*(Pageantry refers to a* ***splendid scene filled with colours and costumes****, movement and sound. It is an effective choice of word if one considers that the poet feels that this* ***funeral is all just for “show”.)***

1. What do the words “Black, green and gold” suggest? How does this shift the reading of the poem? (2)

*(These are the* ***colours of the ANC*** *and makes the reader see the poem in a* ***political light****. The poem is both personal and political.)* ***Personal level – graduates*** *attended the funeral – garb.*

1. Why would the graves be expectant of ‘eternity’ (line 2)? (2)

*(The graves are* ***‘waiting’ for the dead bodies*** *who will be buried and stay there forever.)*

1. Explain the reference to “hope” as it is used in line 6. (2)

*(****Hopes for the future*** *– the fulfilment of life by Valencia. Could* ***also suggest a sense of hopelessness – “what was all of this for****?” The poet speaks of* ***“our hopes” – inclusive of the reader.)***

1. What are “carrion books of birth”? (2)

*(****Passbooks*** *carried by all non-white people****. Carrion (meat/dead being****) - refers to the* ***people not actually being dead, but dead-like due to oppression.)***

1. Comment on the tone in “Arise!” and “Salute!”. (3)

*A* ***commanding tone*** *is used.* ***Salute! –*** *gesture of respect which must be given to*

*Those who selflessly devoted themselves to the struggle.* ***Arise!*** *is a command. The poet uses a* ***tone of defiance****. People need not merely surrender but fight the apartheid government.*

1. Why does the speaker call on the reader to “ponder” (line 5)? (2)

*(The speaker asks the reader to* ***contemplate the implications of this funeral****, and death in general. He encourages the reader to* ***look further than the ‘showcase’/display****.)*

1. What is the difference between “Death” and “death’s head” and why is “scythes our ground” an appropriate metaphor? (3)

*(****Death is personified*** *– it is the mortal end of life. Death is often portrayed as a* ***cloaked skeleton carrying a scythe – the cutting of life****. A* ***death’s head is a skull. Here is refers to the tyranny of a system that cuts down the lives of black people****. So ‘scythes’ is an effective metaphor.)*

1. Discuss the pun in the word “plots” in line 11. (3)

*(It can be a* ***verb*** *– to plot is to make a* ***secret plan*** *to destroy someone or something. In this context the* ***political system makes plans to contain the black people*** *in ‘narrow cells. These could be* ***prison cells or graves****. Plots could also refer to literal graves.)*

1. Describe the **tone i**n and the effectiveness of the last line of the poem. (3)

*(It is a* ***commanding/defiant tone****. He states that it is* ***better to die than to “lie down****” – to* ***submit to oppressive powers****. He encourages the reader/his people to fight against oppression. It is forceful and* ***honest conclusion in response to the funeral of Valencia.)***

1. How does the reader know that this poem is more than a tribute to Valencia Majombozi? Discuss the effectiveness of this added message/theme. (3)

*(There is a definite* ***mourning for this specific individual****, but the speaker* ***encourages the reader to think beyond that****. He addresses the concept of death in general and* ***the waste of life if a life is cut short, before a person reached full potential****. He also uses the second stanza as a “****call to arms” of sorts. He states that it is better to die than to submit to the powers of oppression.)***