<table>
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<th>Question number</th>
<th>PLAN</th>
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<td>Intro</td>
<td>- her thoughts and feelings are sadness and she feels sorry for them.</td>
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<td>- through alliteration, enjambment, polysyndeton</td>
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<td>- these devices help her convey her feelings</td>
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<td>Play is described</td>
<td>- Dangerous</td>
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In this poem, the poet's feelings are expressed through the words

In this poem, the poet's feelings about the children are sadness and that they are 'trackless'. She also feels that the children are not loved by their parents and don't seem to have a very nice lifestyle or area to play in. Her feelings about the children are shown through her uses of enjambment, alliteration and a change in tone when the parents are mentioned and a caesura is used. The structure of the poem is one long stanza. This may imply that her thoughts about how the children play is a long train of thoughts and is an outsider looking in and watching the behaviour of the children.

The childrens play is described by using alliteration to emphasise the activities they are enduring. The children and 'shirmishing and sliding on the grit' and are 'standing staring at a vacant play-space.' The children are 'sliding' so making the most of the area they have to play in. By them 'shirmishing' it may suggest that they are squading and enjoying themselves despite the lack of facilities. There is also enjambment used which adds to the 'sliding' of the children and emphasises this image. The children that are 'standing staring' could be mean that they are based of the same activities and the alteration emphasises them 'staring' into a 'vacant play-space'. The 'vacant play-space' is an open area that may be daunting and just an open place on the road for the children to play in. Therefore the alliteration used conveys the poets feelings because it shows how she feels sorry for them and in 'All day' the children create games with parts of the environment that they can spot in the streets. They play 'throwing coke cans, threats, tumbling down the absurd grass'. These activities are not jolly games and what children should not be doing. The 'throwing of coke-cans' is violent and is dangerous, which is not the type of game that children should be doing. 'Tumbling down' may suggest that the children are throwing themselves down the 'absurd grass' which is not a safe activity and 'absurd' is a good feeling to show how the poet may be thinking of when seeing these children play All Day. The children have to collect old scraps from 'broken egg glass and matchsticks' to mend 'make little, barbed worlds'. This shows that they don't have any nice safe toys to play with but have to collect scraps of material that they can find from the streets. The fact it is 'broken glass' adds to the danger of the children handling the glass. 'Matchsticks' are also dangerous because they can create fire which is all another unsafe object not to play with by children. The
images used to describe how the children play are dangerous images and this may imply that the poet feels like the children don't have a safe lifestyle and can't feel sorry for them.

The parents described in this poem may make the poet feel like the children are unloved and can be betrayed by them. This is shown through the alteration of ‘fathers come and leave // in vans or on foot // without a word.’ This is all enjambed which emphasises the journey of the fathers leaving home. It may suggest that they don't seem to care about the children and ‘come and leave’ without showing any sign of affection. The enjambedness also adds to the effect of the journey of the father and like that he never stops and does this ‘without a word’. This could mean that he feels like the father feels like he has given up on trying and just doesn't care about the behaviour of the children. This links to the feelings of the poet because it shows how she is upset about the father not caring for his children.

The portrayal of the parents is also shown through the mothers actions of ‘shouting from windows’. This could suggest her laziness to approach the children properly and may also show that the mother has given up trying to teach the children how to play nicely because ‘the children never listen’. This may be because they have never been taught to do so or have rebelled and ‘never listen’ because they aren't disciplined. The words her may express the poets feeling of betrayal and sadness because of the lack of commitment and frustration from the children being badly behaved and the parents ‘shouting and not saying a word’.

The impact of the ending of the poem makes someone feel like the children have been influenced by something bad. They start off with ‘new toys’, ‘white socks’ & ‘washed faces’, which shows that they were once tidy and treated well but then the contrast of them ‘always end here’// dirty and alone.’. This could suggest that the playing as ‘outdoor children’ changes how they behave and the impact is sudden and a vast change. The use of polysyndeton emphasises the different phrases and the images of the children but it is then asyndeton is used when talking about the contrast of them ‘end here’ and ‘dirty and alone’. This breaks up the words and emphasises how they become. This adds to the impact because it shows that the poet feels the children are sad and sorry for the children even through they are the ones that change themselves.

The penultimate line that says ‘one street beyond’ likes to the title. This adds to the effect that this one street leads the ‘beyond justice or love’ and that this ‘one street’ can change a childs behaviour. This ‘one street’ also emphasises that it is the only street that is like this and the only one to lead ‘beyond justice or love’. This can could imply that the read ‘street’ is a harsh place and that only once street further can lead you give you ‘love’ and happiness. Due to To link this with the feelings of poet it shows that the negative words used make her feel sad but the contrast of the ‘justice and love’ makes us believe she feels that there is hope for the children. and that she feels to they are just different.
Examiner commentary tasks

does this contribute to the poem’s mood? Which details in the poem suggest that things are broken or dangerous?

The poet does not empathise with the children. Does she sympathise with them and understand why they behave as they do? When they make ‘little, barbed worlds’ how does this reflect the world around them?

Ask students to write a paragraph of their own about how they felt about the ending of the poem. Do they agree that the children seem to be victims? Are they victims of fate, or the circumstance of their society? Is it their fault? Their parents’ fault? Someone else’s fault?

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Look carefully at the description of the parents two-thirds of the way through the poem. What are the family lives of the children like? You can dramatise this, either by acting it out, or by writing a script, or both.

Two of the children come home, late and dirty, at the end of the day. Father has just come home from a job. Imagine what the parents and children will have to say to each other.

CANDIDATE 3

Refer to Script Paper 3, Session 2, High

This very strong answer is highly sustained and developed. It begins with a promising opening statement: it sees the ‘sadness’ of the poet’s reflections and quotes the adjective ‘trackless’, although this might have been followed up by considering the choice of this metaphor. Have the children ‘gone off the rails’? Do they have no path in life, or do they lack guidance? The candidate instead picks up the words of the bullet points and makes quick but sound judgements about the apparent lack of parental love and lack of a pleasant place to play. This shows the value of some reflection before constructing an opening paragraph. There is a list of poetic devices, but also some appreciation of rhythm in the poem and how it might effect a change of tone. Some of the initial points made are very similar to those of Candidate 2, but these are made earlier in the response and developed further. The idea of the poet as ‘an outsider looking in and watching the behaviour of the children’ is a good one and shows appreciation of the significance of viewpoint. Comment on the language describing the children’s play picks up their vigour, but also their boredom and lack of suitable spaces to play, and the poet’s pity for them is understood.

This well-supported answer soon shows appreciation that all is ‘not jolly games’ and that there is a sense of danger. This is developed in the description of the ‘little, barbed worlds’ which the children create out of broken glass. The implications of dangerous images for the children’s safety are explored. Using the bullet point, the candidate goes on to consider the parents. A point is made which is similar to Candidate 2’s about the ‘journey of the fathers’ conveyed through enjambment. However, here the effects of the device are cautiously
interpreted: it could mean the father has ‘given up on trying’, and
the poet is upset by such neglect. That idea that the parents have
given up is given much more support in the analysis of the image
of a mother ‘always tired’ and ‘shouting from windows’. Again, the
question is kept in mind, as the emphasis is on the ‘poet’s feeling of
betrayal and sadness’ at the parents’ lack of commitment and
frustration.

The transition in the children’s lives over the long summer, illustrated
by contrasting description is noted in detail, and rhythmic changes
noticed. They are rightly seen as having the effect of highlighting
individual words and adding emphasis to what the children have
become. The poet’s feelings of sadness and sympathy for the children,
despite the ways in which they bring on those changes themselves,
are understood: this appreciation of the poem’s tone shapes the
whole response. The concluding analysis of the penultimate line,
linking it back to the title and appreciating that such a harsh street
life is only ‘one street beyond’ where there might be love, happiness
or hope is profound, and shows almost a model way of approaching
the opportunity which the last bullet point usually offers to evaluate
the overall impact of the poem as a whole, through considering how
it ends.

23 marks

Using scripts in the classroom
The mark scheme makes some distinct demands of candidates for
the highest grade. They are:
- show a clear critical understanding of the text (U)
- respond sensitively and in detail to the effects in the writing (L)
- integrate much well-selected reference (T)
- show insight, individuality and flair: personal response (P)
- show complete and sustained engagement with text and task (E)

Annotate Candidate 3’s scripts with the letters shown above.
Compare annotations with other students. Does everyone agree
about the strengths of this response?
How well does this script demonstrate the advanced skills discussed
early?

Look for comments on diction, implication, syntax, imagery, tone
and mood.

Examiner says
✔ The answer makes a well-
focused and detailed exploration
of language and form while
appreciating that tone and
mood are central to appreciation
of this poem.
✘ Misses the opportunity to
explore the implications of the
choice of metaphors. The lack of
tracks and safe places for
children might be the reason for
their transition from the
innocence of ‘white socks…
washed faces’ to the gritty reality
of darkened, hardened youths at
the end of the poem. Poems
often provide a ‘slideshow’ of
images whose symbolic
interpretations deserve close
attention.

Top tips for students
- Appreciate the tone and
  mood of a poem before
  beginning to write about it.
- Think about what is implied
  by the poet’s choice of
  words.
- Look at ways in which run-on
  lines and pauses contribute
  to the rhythm of the poem.
- Use inference to shape a
  personal interpretation.
- Think about ways in which
  mood might change as a
  poem develops.
- Explore in detail the meaning
  of the last lines.