

Sample Answers – Shakespearean Drama

Question from the 2002 Junior Certificate Examination

Answer either (A) or (B).

(A) SHAKESPEAREAN DRAMA

The following extract (in edited form) is taken from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by William Shakespeare. Read the extract carefully and then answer the questions which follow.

Background to this extract:

- *Helena loves Demetrius*
- *Demetrius loves Hermia*
- *Hermia loves Lysander*
- *Hermia and Lysander are to meet in the woods and run away to be married*
- *Helena informs Demetrius of this*
- *Helena hopes Demetrius will forget about Hermia and give his love to her*

Enter Demetrius, Helena following him.

Demetrius: I love thee not, therefore pursue me not.
Where is Lysander, and fair Hermia?
The one I'll slay, the other slayeth me.
Thou told'st me they were stol'n unto this wood,
And here am I, and mad within this wood
Because I cannot meet my Hermia.
Hence, get thee gone, and follow me no more.

Helena: You draw me, you hard-hearted adamant!* *magnet

Demetrius: Do I entice you? Do I speak you fair?
Or rather do I not in plainest truth
Tell you I do not, nor I cannot love you?

Helena: And even for that do I love you the more.
I am your spaniel; and Demetrius,
The more you beat me I will love you.

Use me but as your spaniel: spurn me, strike me,
Neglect me, lose me; only give me leave,
Unworthy as I am, to follow you.
What worser place can I beg in your love
(And yet a place of high respect with me)
Than to be used as you use your dog?

Demetrius: Tempt not too much the hatred of my spirit;
For I am sick when I do look on thee.

Helena: And I am sick when I look not on you.

Demetrius: You do impeach* your modesty too much, **put in danger*
To leave the city and commit yourself
Into the hands of one who loves you not;
To trust the opportunity of night,
And the ill counsel of a desert place.

Helena: Your virtue is my privilege: for that
It is not night when I do see your face,
Therefore I think I am not in the night;
Nor doth this wood lack worlds of company,
For you in my respect, are all the world.
Then how can it be said I am alone
When all the world is here to look on me?

Demetrius: I'll run from thee and hide me in the woods
And leave thee to the mercy of wild beasts.

Helena: The wildest hath not such a heart as you.

Demetrius: I will not stay thy questions. Let me go;
Or if thou follow me, do not believe
But I shall do thee mischief in the wood.

Helena: Ay, in the temple, in the town, the field,
You do me mischief. Fie, Demetrius,
Your wrongs do set a scandal on my sex!
We cannot fight for love, as men may do;
We should be wooed, and were not made to woo.

[Exit Demetrius]

Answer **two** of the following questions. Each question is worth 15 marks.

1. What kind of relationship is evident between Demetrius and Helena? Support your answer by reference to the text.

2. For a classroom production of this scene you have been chosen to play the part of Demetrius **or** Helena. How would you play your part? You might refer to tone of voice, movement, costume, facial expression, etc.

3. Basing your answer on evidence from the text, would you like either Demetrius or Helena as a boyfriend or girlfriend? Support your answer by reference to the text.

1. What kind of relationship is evident between Demetrius and Helena? Support your answer by reference to the text.

Planning your answer

- Reading through the question carefully, you can see that it is quite straightforward: all you have to do is examine the relationship between the couple.
- The key words in this question are "kind of relationship". You must define it, saying what type of relationship it is, e.g. normal, dysfunctional, unequal, loving etc. In this case, the relationship is an unequal one: it is a clear case of unrequited love.
- Read the introduction; in the first two lines we learn that Helena loves Demetrius but Demetrius loves Hermia.
- Read through the text and underline the quotes which you will use in your answer.
- Plan:- *unrequited love - not a real relationship*
H loves D – can't be put off
D feels contempt for H
Not equal relationship – totally different wavelengths
- This is a perfectly adequate plan; it ensures that there are several points all in chronological order and a theme which is developed throughout the answer.
- Remember - make a point, develop it and support it with a quote. The placement of the quotes within the answer can vary.

1. Sample answer:

<p>It is clear that this is not a proper relationship but a case of unrequited love. Helena is obviously very much in love with Demetrius, telling him plainly of her attraction: "You draw me, you hard-hearted adamant!" while he has no time for her; he only wants to find 'fair Hermia' and asks Helena if he has not told her plainly, 'I do not, nor I cannot love you?'</p> <p>Helena is <u>not at all put off</u> by Demetrius' rejection of her advances, she claims that they only make her "love you more". It seems that the more Demetrius pushes the <u>infatuated</u> Helena away, the more she is attracted to him. She even offers to follow him like a pet dog and claims she will be happy to take abuse: "I am your spaniel: spurn me, strike me". It is plain that <u>Helena is in denial</u>; nothing Demetrius says can dissuade her from believing that he may yet have feelings for her.</p> <p>Demetrius seems to feel <u>anger and contempt</u> for the clingy Helena. Her words of love revolt him, as does her very presence, "I am sick when I do look on thee". He tries to appeal to her reason to get her to leave him in peace, pointing out the danger inherent in following him into the woods at night: "You do impeach your modesty too much," but Helena is not deterred in the slightest: "It is not night when I do see your face". Even when the <u>exasperated</u> Demetrius threatens to leave her alone and at "the mercy of wild beasts", Helena stays by his side. Finally, having warned her of vague dangers and of the prospect of being attacked by wild animals, Demetrius openly says that he will harm her himself: "I shall do thee mischief in the woods". Still, the <u>deluded</u> Helena loves him and is willing to continue trying to make him love her back, even though she admits that women "should be wooed, and were not made to woo".</p> <p>There is clearly no equality in the relationship between Demetrius and Helena, they are on completely different wavelengths. He is willing to do almost anything to get rid of her and she is willing to do almost anything to stay with him.</p>	<p><i>I make my point straight away by saying <u>what kind of relationship it is</u>. I quote to support my point.</i></p> <p><i>Each new point gets a new paragraph.</i></p> <p><i>Underlined words support my claim that this is an unequal relationship.</i></p> <p><i>Brief conclusion.</i></p>
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2. For a classroom production of this scene you have been chosen to play the part of Demetrius **or** Helena.

How would you play your part? You might refer to tone of voice, movement, costume, facial expression, etc.

- This is a question about stagecraft.
- Look at the tips given to you in the question, they will help you to form a plan.
- You do not have to stick to those elements of stagecraft mentioned in the question but they make a good starting point.
- Planning the answer:- *Position on stage – H following D*
Voice – H pleading, whiny?
Gestures – H clinging – facial ex. H focussed on D throughout.
Costume – long dress, dishevelled hair. Gaudy colour?
- Remember, this question is also testing your understanding of the extract so be sure to explain your decisions by referring to the text.

2. Sample answer:

<p>If I were chosen to play the role of Helena, I would try to make her appear desperate and off-putting in her foolish love for Demetrius.</p> <p>In order to show her complete fixation on Demetrius, I would follow him around the stage, staying as physically close to him as possible and trying to look into his eyes at every opportunity. As he searches for Hermia, I would try to block him when I could, attempting to become the focus of his attention and to distract him from his quest. My shoulders would be slightly hunched and my hands clasped together to imply through body language that I am begging for his love and am willing to humble myself. As Helena says she is willing to be "used as you use your dog", I would perhaps kneel on the floor and cling to Demetrius' leg to show this utter devotion.</p> <p>Helena's voice should indicate her frame of mind so I would use a</p>	<p><i>Outline of main ideas.</i></p> <p><i>Detailed description – supported by quotation and reference.</i></p> <p><i>New paragraph here as I am</i></p>
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<p>slightly whiny, pleading tone when speaking. This would add to Demetrius' annoyance and make it even more believable that he would reject this infatuated girl. When he speaks angrily, I would ignore the meaning of his words and try to win him over with an even more exaggeratedly adoring voice. I would keep a slightly foolish smile on my face as I gazed at the man of my dreams and try to flirt with him by peeping at him coyly from under lowered lashes.</p> <p>My costume would depend on the period in which the play was set, but assuming it was Shakespearian times, I would wear a long, flowing dress. I might choose a gaudy colour that would look jarring in a woodland setting and would clash with the colours in Demetrius' costume. This could help to show how unsuited they are and how out of place Helena is as she clings to Demetrius' side. As the couple have been travelling through the woods, I would wear my hair in a slightly dishevelled style.</p> <p>I would hope, through the use of these elements of stagecraft, to give the audience a good idea of Helena's character in this scene.</p>	<p><i>moving on to a new topic: voice.</i></p> <p><i>I explain why I would choose certain colours and I use reference to the play to support my choice.</i></p> <p><i>Brief conclusion.</i></p>
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3. Basing your answer on evidence from the text, would you like either Demetrius or Helena as a boyfriend or girlfriend? Support your answer by reference to the text.

- This is a question about character, so you should show your understanding of Demetrius or Helena's nature as it is shown in this extract.
- The examiner will be looking for a personal response here; he or she will want to know that you have formed an opinion on the protagonists.
- While there is no right or wrong answer, you will lose marks if you don't explain your choices by referring to or quoting from the extract.
- Planning your answer:- *H – overly clingy*
Seems to have no self respect - foolish
doesn't listen-twists D's words
couldn't have equal relationship with her
impossible to break it off

3. Sample answer:

<p>I would not like to have Helena as a girlfriend. She seems to be extremely clingy, following Demetrius everywhere, despite his telling her he doesn't love her and asking her to go away: "I love thee not, therefore pursue me not".</p> <p>The fact that Helena seems to have no self respect makes her very unattractive to me. She is willing to act like Demetrius' pet dog, "I am your spaniel, spurn me, strike me" and does not seem to see that she is making herself appear embarrassingly needy. Even when Demetrius threatens to abandon her to the "mercy of wild beasts" or to "do thee mischief in the woods", Helena is undaunted. This seems extremely foolish to me and makes her appear dreadfully silly, not a quality I would want in a girlfriend.</p> <p>As well as being unwise, I think Helena could be quite manipulative; she twists Demetrius' words when he says the sight of her makes him sick. Her reply, "And I am sick when I look not on you", tells me that she is cunning enough to turn things to her advantage if she wants and I would be very wary of someone who was not straightforward and honest. It would be difficult to have a relationship with a person who is incapable of listening and instead hears what they want to hear.</p> <p>For a relationship to work, I feel it is best if the people in it are equal partners, which would not be possible with Helena. Her greatest ambition seems to be to idolise Demetrius, regardless of whether or not he likes her. Her blind adoration in the face of such hostility and contempt also make me wonder what hope anyone would have of breaking up with her. I imagine she would have the potential to become a stalker, refusing to accept that the affair was over, just as she refuses to accept that Demetrius does not love her.</p>	<p><i>Conditional tense – see tense in question.</i></p> <p><i>I refer back to the question.</i></p> <p><i>Again, I explain why these traits would make her an unsuitable girlfriend.</i></p> <p><i>Personal response – appropriate for this type of question.</i></p>
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Question from the 2003 Junior Certificate Examination

The following extract (in edited form) is taken from *As You Like It* by William Shakespeare. Read the extract carefully and then answer the questions which follow.

Background to this extract:

- *Rosalind is the daughter of the banished Duke Senior.*
- *Celia is the daughter of Duke Frederick (Duke Senior's brother). Duke Frederick has taken over his brother's lands and now rules his Dukedom.*
- *Rosalind and Celia are not only cousins but great friends.*

Enter Duke Frederick with Lords.

Rosalind: Look, here comes the Duke.

Celia: With his eyes full of anger.

Duke Frederick: Mistress, dispatch you with your safest haste,
And get you from our Court.

Rosalind: Me uncle?

Duke Frederick: You cousin,
Within these ten days if that thou be'st found
So near our public Court as twenty miles,
Thou diest for it.

Rosalind: I do beseech your Grace,
Let me the knowledge of my fault bear with me:
Dear uncle,
Never so much as in a thought unborn,
Did I offend your Highness.

Duke Frederick: Thus do all traitors,
If their purgation* did consist in words, * repentance
They are as innocent as grace itself;
Let it suffice thee that I trust thee not.

Rosalind: Yet your mistrust cannot make me a traitor;
Tell me whereon the likelihood depends.

Duke Frederick: Thou art thy father's daughter, there's enough.

Rosalind: So was I when your Highness took his Dukedom,
So was I when your Highness banish'd him;
My father was no traitor,

Then good my Liege, mistake me not so much,
To think my poverty is treacherous.

Celia: Dear Sovereign hear me speak.

Duke Frederick: Ay Celia, we stay'd her for your sake,
Else had she with her father rang'd along.

Celia: I did not then entreat to have her stay,
It was your pleasure, and your own remorse;
I was too young that time to value her,
But now I know her: if she be a traitor,
Why so am I: we still have stayed together,
Rose at an instant, learn'd, play'd, eat together,
And whereso'er we went, we went coupled and inseparable.

Duke Frederick: She is too subtle for thee, and her smoothness,
Her very silence, and her patience,
Speak to the people, and they pity her:
Thou art a fool, she robs thee of thy name,
And thou wilt show more bright, and seem more virtuous
When she is gone: then open not thy lips;
Firm, and irrevocable is my doom,
Which I have pass'd upon her, she is banish'd.

Celia: Pronounce that sentence then on me my Liege,
I cannot live out of her company.

Duke Frederick: You are a fool: you niece prepare yourself,
If you outstay the time, upon mine honour,
And in the greatness of my word you die.

Exit Duke Frederick with Lords.

Answer **two** of the following questions. Each question is worth 15 marks.

1. From your reading of this extract describe the character of Duke Frederick.
2. What kind of relationship is evident between Celia and Rosalind in this extract?
Support your answer by reference to the text.

The Drama Continues

3. Write the scene which you imagine took place between Rosalind and Celia immediately after the above extract. Use appropriate dialogue and stage directions in answering.

1. From your reading of this extract describe the character of Duke Frederick.

- Plan: *Angry and cruel*
Paranoid, unfair, treacherous and vindictive
Insensitive, unkind father

<p>At the start of this extract, we learn that Duke Frederick <u>is in a rage</u>. Celia notes that his eyes are "full of anger." Immediately, he tells Rosalind that she is banished from the court. <u>His cruelty is evident</u> when he tells her that if she is found within twenty miles of the court in ten days time, "Thou diest for it." Threatening to kill a member of his own family shows how <u>ruthless</u> Duke Frederick is.</p>	<p><i>I started at the beginning of the extract and looked at each speech for information about the Duke's character.</i></p>
<p>The Duke is <u>unreasonable and unfairly believes that Rosalind is guilty of treachery</u> because of who she is: "Thou art thy father's daughter, there's enough." The Duke has taken over his brother's land and he clearly feels <u>paranoid and insecure</u> in his position as ruler. It is ironic that he should accuse Rosalind of being a traitor when he has <u>treacherously</u> usurped his own brother's dukedom. Turning on his niece and threatening to kill her when even he admits she has done nothing wrong shows how <u>suspicious</u> he is of those around him.</p>	<p><i>Each point is supported by evidence from the passage.</i></p>
<p>Not only is the Duke a <u>cruel uncle</u>, but he is also an unkind and <u>insensitive father</u>. We learn in the introduction that Celia and Rosalind are great friends and Celia reinforces this when she tells us how close the pair are: "And whereso'er we went, we went coupled and inseparable." The Duke takes no notice of this and <u>harshly</u> tells Celia: "You are a fool". He calls her a fool twice in the extract, which does not seem like the behaviour of a loving father. He <u>doesn't seem to care at all how upset his daughter is</u> by Rosalind's banishment and actually tries to reason with her by explaining that, with her cousin out of the picture, Celia will have less competition and will therefore "show more bright, and seem more virtuous". This shows <u>how little the Duke understands about his daughter's feelings</u> and how <u>thoughtless and callous</u> he is.</p>	<p><i>I have underlined the key words but you should not do this in the exam. I did it to show you the types of words the examiner will be looking for.</i></p>
<p>For all these reasons, I believe the Duke to be a thoroughly <u>unpleasant</u> person with <u>no redeeming characteristics</u>.</p>	<p><i>Your use of adverbs and adjectives can show your understanding of a person's character.</i> <i>Brief conclusion.</i></p>

2. What kind of relationship is evident between Celia and Rosalind in this extract?
Support your answer by reference to the text.

<p>From my reading of this extract, I think the relationship between Celia and Rosalind is a very close one. They have been together since they were very young and they have grown to know and like one another more and more over the years. Celia says that when she and Rosalind met first, "I was too young that time to value her. / But now I know her." Over the years they have done everything together and are now "coupled and inseparable."</p> <p>Duke Frederick is concerned that Rosalind threatens both his authority and his daughter's popularity with the people. When he tries to banish Rosalind, Celia defends her cousin to her father, saying: "...if she be a traitor, / Why so am I". This shows that Celia is exceptionally loyal to her beloved cousin. Her bravery and loyalty is put to the test when Duke Frederick calls Celia a fool and tells her that she will be better off when Rosalind is gone. Celia cannot contemplate life without her cousin and even though there is a threat of death hanging over anyone who defies the duke, she says she wants to be banished along with Rosalind, claiming: "I cannot live out of her company."</p> <p>The fact that Celia is willing to stand up for Rosalind in the face of Duke Frederick's anger and happy to go into exile with her shows that the friendship the girls share is more important than anything to Celia. The cousins could hardly be closer.</p>	<p><i>I define the relationship straight away.</i></p> <p><i>Short quotes to support my points.</i></p> <p><i>I explain why I have chosen certain quotes and show that they prove my point.</i></p>
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Sample Answers– Other Drama

2002

The following extract (in edited form) is taken from *Educating Rita* by Willy Russell. Read the extract and then answer the questions which follow.

Background to the extract:

As an adult learner, Rita is attending university to study literature. She is a housewife and also works as a hairdresser. She studies at home and comes to college on a regular basis to meet her literature tutor, Frank.

Frank enters carrying a briefcase and a pile of essays. He takes sandwiches and an apple from his briefcase and puts them on his desk and then goes to the window ledge and dumps the essays and briefcase. He sits in a swivel chair, switches on the radio, opens the packet of sandwiches, takes a bite and then picks up a book and starts reading.

Rita bursts through the door out of breath.

Frank: What are you doing here? *(He looks at his watch)* It's Thursday, you...

Rita: *(moving over to the desk quickly)* I know I shouldn't be here, it's me dinner hour, but listen, I've got to tell someone, have you got a few minutes, can you spare...?

Frank: *(alarmed)* My God, what is it?

Rita: I had to come and tell you, Frank, last night, I went to the theatre! A proper one, a professional theatre.

Frank gets up and switches off the radio and then returns to the swivel chair

Frank: *(sighing)* For God's sake, you had me worried, I thought it was something serious.

Rita: No, listen, it was. I went out and got me ticket, it was Shakespeare, I thought it was gonna be dead boring...

Frank: Then why did you go in the first place?

Rita: I wanted to find out. But listen, it wasn't boring, it was bleeding great, honest, ogh, it done me in, it was fantastic. I'm gonna do an essay on it.

Frank: *(smiling)* Come on, which one was it?

Rita moves up right centre

Rita: '...Out, out, brief candle!

Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
And then is heard no more. It is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury
Signifying nothing.'

Frank: (*deliberately*) Ah, 'Romeo and Juliet.'

Rita: (*moving towards Frank*) Tch. Frank! Be serious. I learnt that today from the book.

(*She produces a copy of 'Macbeth'*) Look, I went out an' bought the book. Isn't it great? What I couldn't get over is how excitin' it was.

Frank puts his feet up on the desk

Rita: Wasn't his wife a cow, eh? An' that fantastic bit where he meets Macduff an' he thinks he's all invincible. I was on the edge of me seat at that bit. I wanted to shout out an' tell Macbeth, warn him.

Frank: You didn't, did you?

Rita: Nah. Y' can't do that in a theatre, can y'? It was dead good. It was like a thriller.

Frank: Yes. You'll have to go and see more.

Rita: I'm goin' to. Macbeth's a tragedy isn't it?

Frank nods

Rita: Right. (*She smiles at Frank and he smiles back at her*) Well I just - I just had to tell someone who'd understand.

Frank: I'm honoured that you chose me.

Rita: (*moving towards the door*) Well, I better get back. I've left a customer with a perm lotion. If I don't get a move on there'll be another tragedy.

Answer **two** of the following questions. Each question is worth 15 marks.

1. You are presented with the opportunity of ending up on a desert island with one of these two characters. Which one would you choose and why?

2. Do you think Rita is a good student? Give reasons for your answer based on evidence from the text.

3. For a classroom production of this scene you have been chosen to play the part of Frank **or** Rita. How would you play your part? You might refer to tone of voice, movement, costume, facial expression, etc.

1. You are presented with the opportunity of ending up on a desert island with one of these two characters. Which one would you choose and why?

- This is a question about **character**.
- Don't obsess about the reference to the desert island. It's just a way of asking you what you find likeable about either Frank or Rita and why you would enjoy being in their company.

Plan: *Rita – enthusiastic / positive
open to new ideas
clever and ambitious
good sense of humour
chatty and friendly*

Note: This answer is far longer than the one you would be expected to give in the exam, but I wanted to show you all the possible things that could be said about Rita. I have given a shorter version after this answer.

<p>If I were presented with the opportunity of ending up on a desert island with one of these two characters, I would choose Rita. In the extract given on this exam paper, Rita comes across as someone who is positive, enthusiastic, open to new ideas, clever, ambitious, funny and friendly. These traits would, I believe, make her good company and I can't imagine that it would be easy to be bored with her around.</p>	<p><i>The first sentence reflects the question. Then I outline the points in favour of Rita.</i></p>
<p><u>Rita's enthusiasm and positive nature are shown clearly as soon as she is introduced in the extract.</u> The stage directions tell us that she "bursts through the door out of breath." In her haste to get to the university to talk to Frank, she has rushed to see him in the little free time she has during her lunch break. She is so excited by her experience at the theatre that she cannot wait to share it with Frank, who she feels will understand. Rita speaks as though it were imperative for her to tell him about the play. She says, "I've gorra tell someone," and "I had to come an' tell y', Frank". When Frank says that her bursting into the office made him worry that "it was something serious", she tells him "it was." <u>I found her enthusiasm</u></p>	<p><i>Topic sentence tells the examiner what traits I will be discussing in this paragraph.</i></p> <p><i>Quotes support my points.</i></p> <p><i>Why I find Rita</i></p>

<p>to be <u>infectious</u>, as Frank clearly does too when he relaxes, smiles and asks her to tell him about the play. Rita goes on to describe "Macbeth" in a very honest and positive way, without any pretentiousness or self-consciousness, and her enthusiasm shines through her excited speech. She uses the words "fantastic", "bleedin' great" and says that the play had her "on the edge of me seat".</p>	<p><i>likeable, which is what the question asked, essentially.</i></p>
<p>As well as being positive and enthusiastic, Rita also comes across as someone who is clever, ambitious and open to new ideas. We are told in the introduction that she is a housewife and a hairdresser and that she has decided to take up the study of literature as an adult learner. This cannot be easy, and we sense that her time is precious – she rushes in and out of the office and says that she has a client waiting already – but she is determined to learn as much as she can. She admits that she went to "Macbeth" thinking "it was gonna be dead borin'..." but wanting to find out nonetheless. This shows that Rita is someone who has an open mind and is willing to learn new things all the time. Her use of colloquial language and dialect shows that she probably hasn't had the benefit of much education up to now, but she is clearly intelligent and well-able for her present course of study. Although she has only seen "Macbeth" the night before, she has already learnt lines from it and is eager to write an essay on the play. She also plans to go and see more plays and seems very ambitious about her studies. I don't think many students would take it upon themselves to do that much work outside of college. I think Rita would be someone who would make the most of any situation and would learn as much as she could about wherever she was. This would make her an ideal companion on a desert island, as I can't imagine her giving up or not coping admirably.</p>	<p><i>Topic sentence.</i></p> <p><i>Development and quotes or reference to the extract to support my point.</i></p> <p><i>Again, referring back to the question. You must always do this.</i></p>
<p>In this extract, Rita appears friendly, chatty and funny. She talks almost non-stop and wants to share her happiness and pleasure in her discovery of the theatre with her tutor. Although he is her teacher and from a very different educational background, she chats openly to him and doesn't appear at all intimidated by him. She calls him "Frank" and tells him to be serious when he jokes that the lines she quoted are from "Romeo and Juliet". She is very</p>	<p><i>Topic sentence.</i></p> <p><i>Development, supported by quotation and reference.</i></p>

conversational in her approach to "Macbeth", asking Frank: "Wasn't his wife a cow, eh?" Her manner is engaging and she bubbles over with enthusiasm and excitement, which makes me believe she would be a stimulating and interesting person to spend time with. I was also struck by her sense of humour. She knows when Frank is teasing her, but she doesn't mind at all, and is well able to joke herself. At the end of the extract, she says she must rush back to work as she has "left a customer with a perm lotion. If I don't get a move on there'll be another tragedy."

For all the reasons I have outlined above, I think Rita would definitely be my choice for a desert island companion. There would never be a dull moment with her around.

Summarises the main points of the answer.

Shorter version:

Note: As this is a question on character, I have underlined all the words which describe Rita's character.

If I were presented with the opportunity of ending up on a desert island with one of these two characters, I would choose Rita. In the extract given on this exam paper, Rita comes across as someone who is positive, enthusiastic, open to new ideas, clever, funny and friendly.

Rita's enthusiasm and positive nature is shown clearly as soon as she is introduced in the extract. The stage directions tell us that she "bursts through the door out of breath." She is so excited by her experience at the theatre that she cannot wait to share it with Frank, who she feels will understand. I found her enthusiasm to be infectious, as Frank clearly does too when he relaxes, smiles and asks her to tell him about the play.

In this extract, Rita appears friendly, chatty and funny. She talks almost non-stop and wants to share her happiness and pleasure in her discovery of the theatre with her tutor. She is very conversational in her approach to "Macbeth", asking Frank: "Wasn't his wife a cow, eh?" Her manner is engaging and she bubbles over with enthusiasm and excitement, which makes me believe she would be a stimulating and interesting person to spend time with. I was also struck by her sense of humour. She knows

2010

The following extract (in edited form) is adapted from a play *Same Old Moon* by Geraldine Aron.

Read the extract carefully and answer the questions which follow.

Background to this extract:

In this extract we meet Brenda Barnes, just home from Australia. She is visiting her widowed mother, Bridie and her Aunt Peace, who live together.

Also on stage we see the ghost of Desmond - Bridie's late husband and Brenda's father.

Although he reacts to the women's conversation, Desmond says nothing during this extract.

1980s. The stage is split in two - a small cramped living room and a bedroom section which is occupied by Desmond's ghost. The ghost reacts from time to time but is generally still and inconspicuous. Bridie has prepared a tea-trolley; she enters with the milk jug, and puts it on the trolley.

BRENDA: New curtains, Mum? They're lovely.

BRIDIE: Thanks, love.

PEACE: I was just thinking to myself that if you weren't going to notice them we'd wasted our time making them. I thought you'd say something the minute you came in.

BRENDA (reasonably): Give us a chance. I mean they don't exactly jump out at a person. They're exactly the same as the old ones ... *(uncertainly)* aren't they?

BRIDIE: These are mushroom. The old ones were beige. We might as well have kept them if you can't see the difference. Well, I must say Brenda, I thought you were more observant. Not a word about the new tea-trolley.

Bridie hands out cups of tea, first to Peace, then to Brenda.

BRIDIE: Here we are now. Sugar's in.

BRENDA: Sorry to be such a pest, Mum, but I don't take milk or sugar in mine.

BRIDIE: Oh? Since when?

BRENDA: About fifteen years.
BRIDIE: Well, that's strange. Because it's the first I've heard of it.
PEACE: Throw it down the drain if she doesn't want it.
BRIDIE: Black tea. Out of the blue. You remind me of your father, pretending to like his meat underdone.

The light comes up on Desmond 'the ghost'. He becomes alert and reacts now that he is being discussed.

BRENDA (Smiling): Maybe he really did like his meat underdone.

Desmond reacts.

BRIDIE: Indeed he did not. That was all put on, trying to impress people.

Desmond reacts.

PEACE: It's probably smart, in Australia, but can you imagine what black tea does to the lining of your stomach?

BRIDIE: The tannin you mean? Sure tannin is more poisonous than nicotine.

BRENDA: (Showing strain) I'll drink it, OK? No problem at all. *(She drains her cup and slams cup and saucer down on the trolley.)*

BRIDIE: (Wounded) There was no need for that, Brenda. No need at all. How were we supposed to know you suddenly stopped taking milk and sugar? We'll know for the next time.

BRENDA: That's OK then.

PEACE: Bridie and I had a great idea, to simplify our tea drinking. I used to take two sugars and Bridie used to take one. So we split the difference and now we both take one and half and it doesn't matter if the cups get mixed up. Aren't we sensible?

BRENDA: (Smiling) Very sensible.

