

Stage 2 English Studies
Assessment Type 1: Shared Studies
Study of Single Text: *The Glass Menagerie*
Student Response

Setting:

Focus quotes:

- "I'm going to the movies!" "I don't believe that lie!"
- "I go to the movies because - I like adventure. Adventure is something I don't have much of at work, so I go to the movies"
- "There is a trick that would come in handy for me - get me out of this two-by-four situation!"

Williams' use of setting is used to convey the desire for adventure his character Tom experiences regularly. This desire is not understood by his mother Amanda; she is concerned about Tom's nightly adventures to the movies – explaining the foundation of the theme of escape in the play. Tom feels the desire for adventure explaining to his mother "I go to the movies because - I like adventure. Adventure is something I don't have much of at work, so I go to the movies". Displaying his dissatisfaction with his everyday life, Tom allows the reader to connect with him and his everyday unhappiness through his dialogue. The setting of the movies reoccurs throughout Tom's dialogue, giving the sense that the movies are a physical setting that the audience experiences through Tom.

Tom is seemingly in the middle between his mother and sister, giving him more reason to escape. Hence, in order to escape an argument he states to his mother "I'm going to the movies!" To which she replies "I don't believe that lie!" The differences between the characters is distinguished and the readers idea of the characters can be developed by noticing their interaction with the setting and Tom's need and desire for escape and adventure when he goes to the movies, as a result of Amanda trying to make Laura someone she is not.

In terms of influencing the reader's opinions and decisions of the play, the familiar setting of the family apartment is all the reader is visually exposed to. However, with Tom's constant urge to go to the movies, the audience relates the movies with adventure due to its suggested contrast to the familiar claustrophobic setting of the family apartment. Laura finds Tom returning home after a late night at the movies, he expresses his desire for adventure to her and states "There is a trick that would come in handy for me - get me out of this two-by-four situation!" He feels trapped between a desire of independence, and an obligation to his family, which the audience is able to connect to with between the familiar setting and Tom's desire for escape, linking him to his father who abandoned his mother and sister for adventure.

Properties:

Focus quotes:

- Laura's unicorn ornament "Unicorns - aren't they extinct in the real world?" - Jim. "I know!"
- "Go on, I trust you with him! There now - you're holding him gently! Hold him over the light, he loves the light!"
- "Poor little fellow, he must feel lonesome"

The most significant property in *The Glass Menagerie* is Laura's glass collection, one particular ornament which reflects Laura and her personality is her unicorn ornament. Laura's glass unicorn signifies the play's theme of difference and uniqueness. When Laura is reunited with her high school crush, Jim O'Connor, she shows him and lets him hold the unicorn, which is a rare gesture coming from insecure and reserved Laura. Jim states "Unicorns - aren't they extinct in the real world?" To which Laura replies "I know!" This dialogue signifies the connection between Laura and the unicorn as they are both 'extinct' in the modern world. Therefore, insinuating that Laura is unique and rare - like a unicorn.

Laura saying that she knows suggests that she is aware that she's different compared to other young girls her age - personality and social wise. Laura is an introverted person when it comes to associating with other people. However, she opens up to Jim, the unicorn is signified as symbol of trust conveyed by Laura, she states to Jim "Go on, I trust you with him!" There now - you're holding him gently! Hold him over the light, he loves the light!" The unicorn acting as an extension of Laura, Jim is symbolically holding Laura while she professes her trust for Jim.

Because a unicorn is signified as a powerful and a mythological symbol, its difference compared to other animals is easily recognised. This is similar in regards to the audience recognising that Laura is different compared to other young women. Jim speaks to Laura about how he believes unicorns are extinct in the real world, he states "Poor little fellow, must feel lonesome" connecting to Laura's life - feeling lonely, having no friends and insecurity, the fragile glass relates to her own fragility. The audience is able to connect to Laura's difference in the world through her glass unicorn ornament and the qualities they attribute to it.

Costuming:

Focus quotes:

- (Stage direction) "Amanda produces two powder puffs which she wraps in handkerchiefs and stuffs in Laura's bosom"
- "They are gay deceivers" - Amanda "I won't wear them"
- "Why you are not crippled, you just have a little defect - hardly noticeable, even when people have some slight disadvantage like that, they cultivate other things to make up for it - develop charm"
- "The dress is coloured and designed by memory"
- "She is like a piece of translucent glass touched by light, given a momentary radiance, not actual, not lasting"

Costuming is a significant device conveying the play's themes and characters. Laura's costumes suggest both illusion and reality, she is presented the way she is meant to appear, however in reality, she is a fragile and shy person. Moments before Laura is reunited with Jim O'Connor, Amanda tries to boost Laura's self-confidence. The aid of power puffs is a device Amanda uses to try and stop Laura from being so self-conscious, Amanda says to Laura "They are gay deceivers" she thinks that Laura is not mature looking - helping her to boost her self-confidence. However, the audience recognises that this makes Laura feel more uncomfortable.

Because Laura signifies fragility due to her 'crippled' leg, this makes her more insecure and reserved. Amanda tries to boost her self-esteem; she states to Laura "Why you are not crippled, you just have a little defect - hardly noticeable, even! When people have some slight disadvantage like that, they cultivate other things to make up for it - develop charm" Laura does not feel the 'charm' within her. Because of Laura's leg, this allows the audience to connect to Laura's fragile and content personality, evoking sympathy for her.

When Tom sees Laura in her dress for the dinner with Jim, she is conveyed as " ...a piece of translucent glass touched by light, given a momentary radiance, not actual, not lasting". Tom realises that he has not truly seen this Laura in a long time, he also knows that it will not last as Laura is too fragile. As "the dress is coloured and designed by memory", Tom only sees this figure of Laura as a memory from the past, not her as a new and improved Laura.

The dress Laura is wearing is not a part of her character, it is more so a part of Amanda's character, which is something the audience sees and adapts to.

Assessment Comments

This response is illustrative of a B grade.

Knowledge and Understanding

- KU1 Knowledge and understanding is demonstrated of the ways in which Williams uses stylistic features and language techniques to communicate ideas, and to influence the reader's response. Setting, properties and costuming are all explored and characterisation is linked to the focus devices. There is a genuine attempt to connect the author, reader and text. However, in places points could be developed further and examined in more detail. The sections on the unicorn and costuming are stronger than the section on setting.
- KU2 There is evidence of knowledge and understanding of some ideas, values, and beliefs in familiar, and some unfamiliar, texts. The need for adventure, the desire for escape, difference, trust and fragility are all ideas that are touched upon and discussed with evidence from the play.

Analysis

- An1 There is a solid attempt to analyse the connections between the reader's experiences and those explored in the text on an abstract level. The familiar nature of the setting is examined, as are the universal nature of a unicorn as a symbol and what the reader brings to the text. 'Because a unicorn is signified as a powerful and a mythological symbol, its difference compared to other animals is easily recognised. This is similar in regards to the audience recognising that Laura is different compared to other young women... The audience is able to connect to Laura's difference in the world through her glass unicorn ornament and the qualities they attribute to her'. In places these connections could have been explored further.
- An3 There is a clear attempt to analyse a range of ways in which authors use language techniques to influence opinions and decisions in familiar, and some unfamiliar, texts. There is some repetition and in places points could have been explored in more depth.

Application

- Ap1 By using a range of language skills and techniques a clear and coherent text has been created that addresses the meaning and intention of the task. Each of the focus questions has been dealt with in the assignment, clearly addressing each, but without sophistication.
- Ap3 Evidence is integrated well to support conclusions.

Communication

- C1 There is a mostly fluent and precise writing style in evidence. It is more than competent and has a clear focus. The task allows for paragraph responses and key quotes have been used to focus the response.

Performance Standards for Stage 2 English Studies

	Knowledge and Understanding	Analysis	Application	Communication
A	<p>Knowledge and understanding of a wide range of ways in which authors use stylistic features and language techniques to communicate complex and familiar ideas, and to influence the reader's response.</p> <p>Detailed knowledge and understanding of the ideas, values, and beliefs in familiar and unfamiliar texts.</p> <p>Knowledge and understanding of the ways in which creators and readers of familiar and unfamiliar texts use a range of textual conventions to make meaning.</p>	<p>Analysis of complex connections between personal experiences, ideas, values, and beliefs, and those explored in familiar and unfamiliar texts.</p> <p>In comparative exercises, a perceptive analysis of connections between texts, based on analysis and synthesis of similarities and/or differences.</p> <p>Perceptive analysis of a range of ways in which authors use language techniques to influence opinions and decisions in familiar and unfamiliar texts.</p>	<p>Use of a wide range of language skills and techniques to create sophisticated and coherent texts that address the meaning and intention of the task.</p> <p>In comparative exercises, a perceptive recognition of connections between texts, through responses that integrate discussion of texts and move easily between them.</p> <p>Detailed and appropriate use of evidence from texts to support responses, with textual references incorporated fluently in discussion.</p> <p>Skills in using the textual, structural, and conventional features of text types for a range of familiar and unfamiliar contexts, audiences, and purposes.</p>	<p>Fluent and precise writing and speaking, using appropriate style and structure for a range of mainly unfamiliar audiences and contexts.</p> <p>Appropriate use of form and register to convey mostly complex meaning in a range of unfamiliar contexts.</p>
B	<p>Knowledge and understanding of the ways in which authors use stylistic features and language techniques to communicate complex and familiar ideas, and to influence the reader's response.</p> <p>Knowledge and understanding of some ideas, values, and beliefs in familiar, and some unfamiliar, texts.</p> <p>Knowledge and understanding of the ways in which creators and readers of mainly familiar texts use some textual conventions to make meaning.</p>	<p>Analysis of some complex connections between personal experiences, ideas, values, and beliefs, and those explored in familiar, and some unfamiliar, texts.</p> <p>In comparative exercises, a clear analysis of connections between texts, based on analysis of similarities and/or differences.</p> <p>Analysis of a range of ways in which authors use language techniques to influence opinions and decisions in familiar, and some unfamiliar, texts.</p>	<p>Use of a range of language skills and techniques to create clear and coherent texts that address the meaning and intention of the task.</p> <p>In comparative exercises, recognition of connections between texts, through responses that compare and contrast texts in an integrated way.</p> <p>Appropriate use of evidence from texts to support responses, with textual references incorporated in discussion.</p> <p>Skills in using some of the textual, structural, and conventional features of text types for a range of mainly familiar, and some unfamiliar, contexts, audiences, and purposes.</p>	<p>Mostly fluent and precise writing and speaking, using appropriate style and structure for a range of mostly familiar audiences and contexts.</p> <p>Appropriate use of form and register to convey complex and simple meaning in a range of familiar and unfamiliar contexts.</p>
C	<p>Knowledge and understanding of a narrow range of ways in which authors use stylistic features and language techniques to communicate mainly familiar ideas, and to influence the reader's response.</p> <p>Knowledge and understanding of some ideas, values, and beliefs in mainly familiar texts.</p> <p>Knowledge and understanding of some of the ways in which creators and readers of a range of familiar texts use textual conventions to make simple or factual meaning.</p>	<p>Analysis of simple connections between personal experiences, ideas, values, and beliefs, and those explored in familiar texts.</p> <p>In comparative exercises, analysis of connections between texts, based on some understanding of similarities and/or differences.</p> <p>Descriptive analysis of a number of ways in which authors use language techniques to influence opinions and decisions in familiar texts.</p>	<p>Use of language skills and techniques to create texts that address the meaning and intention of the task.</p> <p>In comparative exercises, recognition of some connections between texts, through responses that compare and contrast texts, usually in a sequential rather than an integrated way.</p> <p>Competent use of evidence from texts to support responses, with some use of textual references in discussion.</p> <p>Skills in using some of the textual, structural, and conventional features of some text types for familiar contexts, audiences, and purposes.</p>	<p>Generally fluent and functional writing and speaking, using appropriate style and structure for familiar audiences and contexts.</p> <p>Appropriate use of form and register to convey simple meaning in a narrow range of familiar and unfamiliar contexts.</p>
D	<p>Knowledge and restricted understanding of some simple stylistic features and language techniques used by authors to communicate mainly familiar ideas, and to influence the reader's response.</p> <p>Knowledge and understanding of some familiar ideas, values, and beliefs in familiar texts.</p> <p>Knowledge and understanding of a restricted number of ways in which creators and readers of a narrow range of familiar texts use some textual conventions to make simple or factual meaning.</p>	<p>Reference to simple connections between uncomplicated personal experiences, ideas, values, and beliefs, and those explored in familiar texts.</p> <p>In comparative exercises, answers that make partial comparisons and contrasts.</p> <p>Reference to some ways in which authors use a range of language techniques to influence opinions and decisions in familiar texts.</p>	<p>Use of some language skills and techniques to create texts that partly address the meaning and intention of the task.</p> <p>In comparative exercises, some awareness of connections between texts, through partial responses that mainly deal with texts separately.</p> <p>Some use of evidence from texts to support a response, with use of a narrow range of textual references.</p> <p>Skills in using some of the textual, structural, or conventional features of a text type for a familiar context, audience, or purpose.</p>	<p>Achievement of a level of fluency in writing and speaking, in a mainly appropriate style.</p> <p>Occasionally appropriate use of form and/or register to convey simple meaning in familiar contexts.</p>
E	<p>Knowledge and understanding of a restricted range of simple stylistic features and language techniques used by authors to communicate familiar ideas, and to influence the reader's response.</p> <p>Identification of an idea, a value, or a belief in familiar texts.</p> <p>Knowledge and understanding of the ways in which a creator or reader of a highly familiar text uses textual conventions to make factual meaning.</p>	<p>Recognition of a simple connection between a straightforward personal, experience, idea, value, or belief, and that explored in a highly familiar text.</p> <p>In comparative exercises, answers that make a simple comparison or contrast.</p> <p>Reference to the way in which an author uses language techniques to influence opinions and decisions in a highly familiar text.</p>	<p>Attempted use of a restricted range of language skills and/or techniques to create a text or texts that attempt to address the meaning or intention of the task.</p> <p>In comparative exercises, identification of limited connections between texts, through fragmented responses that deal with texts separately.</p> <p>Restricted use of evidence from texts to support a simple response, with limited textual reference.</p> <p>Skills in using the textual, structural, or conventional features of a text type for a highly familiar context, audience, or purpose.</p>	<p>Emerging development of fluency in an occasionally appropriate style.</p> <p>Occasionally appropriate use of form and register to convey literal meaning in highly familiar contexts.</p>