

Smart Exam Resources

0500-IGCSE-English-Paper-2

PAPER 2 COMPOSITION / PAPER-2-DESCRIPTIVE COMPOSITION

Descriptive-task-07-qp-B-Expert Solution

QUESTION:

- (a) You come across a shop in a side street which you have never noticed before. You enter, and are amazed at what you see. Describe the interior of the shop and the things on sale there. [25]

ANSWER:

The narrow side street was bathed in shadows, its cobblestones uneven and slick from a recent drizzle. As I turned the corner, a small, unassuming shop caught my eye. Its wooden sign hung slightly askew, the faded gold lettering spelling out "Curiosities & Wonders." The window display was a chaotic yet enchanting arrangement: an antique globe with peeling paint, a brass telescope, and an intricately carved music box that seemed to hum faintly in the still air. Drawn by a mixture of curiosity and the allure of the unknown, I pushed open the heavy wooden door.

The scent of aged paper and polished wood enveloped me as I stepped inside. The room was dimly lit, with warm amber light spilling from a wrought-iron chandelier that hung precariously from the ceiling. Shelves stretched from floor to ceiling, crammed with an eclectic mix of items. Leather-bound books with gilded spines jostled for space with delicate porcelain figurines, their painted features so lifelike it felt as though they might blink at any moment. Glass jars lined one wall, their contents strange and fascinating—glittering shards of what looked like crystal, dried herbs with labels written in a spidery script, and even a small preserved creature that looked like a cross between a bird and a lizard.

The air seemed charged with a quiet energy, as though the shop itself were alive. Every surface held treasures waiting to be discovered. A gilded mirror, its frame adorned with twisting vines and tiny carved birds, reflected the room in distorted yet mesmerizing detail. Beneath it stood a table covered in velvet, upon which rested an array of jewelry that seemed to glow faintly: necklaces with pendants of iridescent stones, rings that shimmered with a rainbow of colors, and bracelets so intricate they seemed woven from threads of light.

In the corner, an old phonograph played a haunting melody, its sound soft yet insistent, blending seamlessly with the quiet ticking of a grandfather clock. The

shopkeeper, a figure draped in a long, dark coat, sat behind a counter cluttered with trinkets. Their face was partially obscured by the brim of a hat, but their hands moved deftly, polishing a strange silver object that caught and refracted the light in dazzling patterns.

I wandered through the aisles, each step revealing something new: a map that seemed to shift its markings as I looked at it, a jar of sand that glowed faintly in the dark, and a clock with hands that moved backward yet chimed correctly. The shop was a place where time and reality felt fluid, a sanctuary for the extraordinary.

As I prepared to leave, the shopkeeper's voice, low and smooth, broke the spell. "Take your time," they said, their words lingering in the charged air. And I did, knowing I had stumbled upon a place unlike any other—a portal to a world where the ordinary became extraordinary with every glance.

ANALYSIS:

Analysis of the Writing Based on the Mark Scheme Guidelines:

1. Many Well-Defined, Well-Developed Ideas and Images:

- Detailed Atmosphere:
 - The shop's exterior is described with vivid detail, setting the tone for intrigue:
 - *"Its wooden sign hung slightly askew, the faded gold lettering spelling out 'Curiosities & Wonders.'"*
 - The interior description is immersive, capturing sights, smells, and sounds:
 - Visuals: *"Shelves stretched from floor to ceiling, crammed with an eclectic mix of items."* and *"a gilded mirror...adorned with twisting vines and tiny carved birds."*
 - Scents: *"The scent of aged paper and polished wood."*
 - Sounds: *"A haunting melody...blending seamlessly with the quiet ticking of a grandfather clock."*
 - The shop is portrayed as otherworldly yet tangible, creating a balance between fantasy and reality.
- Unique Items on Display: Each item is distinct and described with care, from *"glass jars filled with glittering shards of crystal"* to *"jewelry that seemed woven from threads of light."* These details enhance the magical atmosphere.

2. Overall Structure Through Devices:

- Movements of the Writer:
 - The progression from entering the shop, observing its contents, and interacting with the shopkeeper creates a natural flow.
 - The writer's movements guide the reader, making the exploration feel personal and dynamic.
- Short Time Span Creation:
 - The piece focuses on the minutes spent inside the shop, capturing a brief yet transformative moment.

- The description emphasizes the immediacy of discovery, maintaining a sense of wonder.
- Atmosphere and Tension:
 - The atmosphere is infused with quiet mystery, from *"The air seemed charged with a quiet energy"* to *"a map that seemed to shift its markings as I looked at it."*
 - Subtle tension is introduced through the enigmatic shopkeeper and the surreal qualities of the items, keeping the reader intrigued.
- No Confusion with a Story: The piece avoids narrative distractions, focusing on descriptive elements that enhance the shop's magical atmosphere.

3. Clarity and Sequence:

- Repetition Avoided: Each detail introduces a new visual, auditory, or emotional element, ensuring variety and engagement.
- Clear Sequence: The description moves logically:
 - Exterior → stepping inside → observing items → interaction with the shopkeeper → closing reflection.
 - This structured progression ensures clarity and coherence.
- Clarity of Description: The vivid and specific details make the shop's interior easy to visualize and deeply engaging.

4. Stylistic and Linguistic Strength:

- Consistency: The tone remains reflective and descriptive throughout, capturing a sense of wonder and curiosity.
- Stylistic Fluency: The writing employs varied sentence structures and rich vocabulary:
 - *"Glass jars lined one wall, their contents strange and fascinating—glittering shards of what looked like crystal."*
 - *"A clock with hands that moved backward yet chimed correctly."*
- Linguistic Accuracy: Grammar, punctuation, and sentence construction are precise and enhance the writing's effectiveness.
- Sense of Audience: The descriptions are crafted to captivate and immerse the reader, appealing to their imagination and curiosity.

Overall Assessment:

The writing meets the guidelines effectively:

- It uses rich, varied descriptions to create a vivid and immersive atmosphere.
- The structure is logical, progressing through a short, transformative moment inside the shop.
- The style is fluent, linguistically strong, and tailored to engage the audience's sense of wonder.