Section I: Texts and human experiences, unseen texts

20 marks · Attempt Questions 1-5 · Allow about 45 minutes

Read the following texts, which are original TPH writing, and answer Questions 1-5. The theme running through them is being noticed, or not noticed, by others.

Text 1 (prose fiction)

from ‘Last Bus’ (original short story)

The 11:40 to Ashfield was empty except for Mina, who sat where she always sat, three seats behind the driver, with her cleaning shoes in a plastic bag on her lap. Her feet ached in the way that does not stop when you sit down. Outside, the city went on lighting its offices for nobody.

“Evening, Mina,” said the driver, not turning round. “Third night this week they’ve given you the long floor.”

She had never told him which floor. She had never told him much at all: three years of nods, a wave, the exact coins. But he had been watching the rear-view mirror, it seemed, the way other people watch the weather, and he had kept what he saw.

“Twenty-two,” she said. Her voice came out rusty, as if the word had been shut in a drawer.

“Thought so.” He indicated left, to no one. “Heater’s on if you want it.”

She did not answer. She was looking at the small, lit rectangle of mirror where, for the length of the ride, someone had been keeping her.

Text 2 (poetry)

‘Crossing Supervisor’ (original poem)

POEM

Ten to eight, and she steps into the road
holding a sign like a small red moon.
The traffic, which obeys nothing, obeys.

Children pour past her knees,
a river that has learned her name
and never once says it.

Rain runs off her coat. She nods
at the tops of caps, the backs of heads,
and says good morning to the weather.

Then the Tuesday she is gone, the road
is only a road. One boy stops at the kerb,
looking for what he cannot name:
a gap in the morning, the shape of a stop.

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Text 3 (nonfiction, newspaper column)

‘The Ones We Don’t See’ (original column)

By a fictional columnist, for TPH practice

Think of the last person who handed you something today. A coffee, a parcel, a ticket. Can you describe their face?

Most of us cannot, and I include myself. We move through a city built by people we never look at: the cleaner who made the floor safe, the driver who got us there, the woman who held up traffic so a child could cross. Their work is the scaffolding of our days, and we treat it like air.

This is not a crime. It is a habit, which is worse, because habits do not feel like choices.

But habits can be broken in a single second. Look up. Say the name on the badge. Say thank you as if you mean it, because you should.

It costs nothing, and it changes the arithmetic of a person’s night. We like to imagine that the world is held together by great deeds. Mostly it is held together by small acts of being seen.

Text 4 (visual text, photograph (described))

‘Level 22, 2 a.m.’ (original image, described in words)

DESCRIPTION OF THE IMAGE

A night-time photograph taken from the street, looking up at a glass office tower. The rest of the building is dark.

On the twenty-second floor one window is lit. In it, a cleaner, small and in silhouette, pushes a trolley between rows of empty desks.

The glass is covered in reflections: the city’s lights and the red tail-lights of cars on the street below hang across the tower like a second, glittering skyline.

The camera is low and tilted upward, so the tower fills the frame and the lit window sits high and tiny near the top.

Caption, bottom left, in small white type: ‘Level 22, 2 a.m.’

Section I: Questions

20 marks

Question 1 (2 marks)

Identify ONE technique used in Text 1 and explain how it shows that the driver has noticed Mina.

Refer to: Text 1

Question 2 (3 marks)

How does the poet use imagery to represent the crossing supervisor’s experience of going unnoticed?

Refer to: Text 2

Question 3 (4 marks)

Analyse how the writer of Text 3 uses language to persuade readers to notice the people who do everyday work.

Refer to: Text 3

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THE WORKED ANSWERS TO THOSE 3 QUESTIONS

Question 1 (2 marks)

Outcome: EST-12-01

How to tackle it, step by step

1. Underline the two jobs in the question: IDENTIFY one technique, then EXPLAIN how it shows the driver has noticed Mina. Two marks usually means one point of each.
2. Scan Text 1 for something the driver says or does that proves he has been paying attention. Dialogue is a technique you can name.
3. Write one sentence that names the technique and quotes a few exact words, and one that says what it shows.

Model response (about 52 words)

The writer uses the driver's dialogue to prove he has been paying attention. His line "Third night this week they've given you the long floor" shows he has counted her shifts, and because Mina "had never told him which floor", the detail reveals that his silent watching has stored up her life.

KEY TAKEAWAY

A 2-mark answer needs a named technique, one short exact quotation, and the effect on meaning. Do not retell the scene; say what the technique proves.

Question 2 (3 marks)

Outcome: EST-12-01

How to tackle it, step by step

1. The key word is IMAGERY. Pick two or three images, not one, because three marks need development.
2. For each image write: the image, the technique (simile, metaphor, personification), and what it says about being unnoticed.
3. Finish with one link to the question: the supervisor is needed but not acknowledged.

Model response (about 98 words)

The poet uses imagery to show a person who is relied on but never acknowledged. The simile "a sign like a small red moon" gives her a quiet, distant authority that makes "the traffic, which obeys nothing, obeys", yet a moon is looked past rather than spoken to. The children are "a river that has learned her name / and never once says it", personifying their knowledge of her as silent, so she is known without being greeted. She "says good morning to the weather", an image that shows she must address the indifferent world because no person answers.

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KEY TAKEAWAY
Three marks means three linked images, each with a named technique and an effect. Quote only the words you analyse.

Question 3 (4 marks)

Outcome: EST-12-01, EST-12-03

How to tackle it, step by step

1. Text 3 is a persuasive column. Ask three questions: who is the writer talking to, what do they want us to do, and which devices make us agree?
2. Choose at least three techniques from different parts of the text (opening, middle, ending).
3. For each, write the technique, a short quotation and its effect on the reader. Keep the ‘persuade’ word in your last sentence.

Model response (about 112 words)

The writer persuades readers by drawing them into the argument. The opening direct address and rhetorical question, “Can you describe their face?”, makes readers test themselves and usually fail, and the admission “and I include myself” builds trust by removing blame. The triple “the cleaner who made the floor safe, the driver who got us there, the woman who held up traffic” makes invisible workers specific, and the metaphor “the scaffolding of our days” shows that daily life depends on them. Short imperatives, “Look up. Say the name on the badge.”, turn the argument into easy actions, and the closing aphorism “small acts of being seen” leaves readers believing that noticing matters.

KEY TAKEAWAY
Four marks rewards range plus effect: at least three techniques from across the text, each tied to how it positions the reader. Always end by naming the persuasive purpose.

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