MEMO ENGLISH PAPER 2 EXAM 19th November 2025

QUESTION 1: ESSAY QUESTION – EVERYONE SANG (10 MARKS)

Topic: 'Relief and happiness often come after a long and difficult struggle.' With close reference to DICTION, IMAGERY and TONE, critically discuss the above statement as it relates to the poem 'Everyone Sang'.

CORE CONTENT POINTS / MEMORANDUM ANSWERS

The candidate must show that the initial 'struggle' (implied trauma, possibly war) makes the subsequent 'relief' overwhelming and profound.

Expected Diction Points (Relief/Struggle)

- **DICTION (Struggle):** Reference to words like **"prisoned"** (Line 3), **"dark-green"** (Line 5), and **"horror"** (Line 8), which establish the prior state of confinement, gloom, and terror (the difficult struggle).
- **DICTION (Relief):** Reference to words like **"suddenly burst out singing"** (Line 1), **"delight"** (Line 2), **"freedom"** (Line 3), and **"beauty"** (Line 7) to highlight the instantaneous, joyful, and liberating nature of the relief.

Expected Imagery Points (Relief/Struggle)

- **IMAGERY (Struggle):** Use of the **"prisoned birds"** simile (Line 3), which functions as a metaphor for the human spirit (likely the soldiers/poet) trapped by circumstance (war).
- **IMAGERY (Relief):** Discussion of the visual imagery of the birds **"Winging wildly across the white / Orchards and dark-green fields; on - on - and out of sight"** (Lines 4-5). This image of escape into boundless space symbolises the overwhelming sense of release from prior confinement.
- **IMAGERY (Beauty):** Analysis of the simile **"beauty came like the setting sun"** (Line 7)—the beauty is natural, immense, and overwhelming, showing that the happiness is vast and restorative.

Expected Tone Points (Relief/Struggle)

- **TONE (Overwhelming Relief):** The shift from terror to **emotional euphoria**, highlighted by the paradox: **"My heart was shaken with tears"** (Line 8). This is not just happiness, but profound, tearful catharsis—the strength of the emotion confirms the severity of the prior struggle.
- **TONE (Triumph/Hope):** The final triumphant tone in **"the singing will never be done"** (Line 10), which suggests the sense of relief is permanent, or at least a powerful and enduring spiritual state that transcends the temporary nature of the horror that has drifted away.

2.1 Discuss the appropriateness of the title of this poem? (2)

Expected Answer	Point Allocation Explanation
The title is effective as it establishes the setting (medium through which racism unfolds) **(1)**. / It sets up the expectation of a conversation, highlighting the shock when it turns discriminatory **(1)**.	**2 Marks:** Award 1 mark for stating appropriateness and 1 mark for justifying the effectiveness

2.2 Refer to lines 4-5: "Madam," I warned … I am African." How does the diction in these lines highlight the speaker's state of mind? (2)

Expected Answer	Point Allocation Explanation
• The word **"warned"** suggests the speaker is cautious, apprehensive, or weary of discrimination **(1)**, preparing the landlady (and himself) for the confrontation **(1)**. • It shows the speaker is proactive/straightforward, aiming to save time/prevent a **"wasted journey" (1)**, indicating he is accustomed to this prejudice **(1)**.	**2 Marks:** Award 1 mark for identifying and quoting/referencing the significant word (**"warned"** or **"wasted journey"**), and 1 mark for explaining the emotional state it conveys (e.g., resignation, caution, weariness).

2.3.1 Refer to line 19: "You mean — like plain or milk chocolate?" Identify the figure of speech. (1)

Expected Answer	Point Allocation Explanation
Simile.	**1 Mark:** Award 1 mark for the correct figure of speech.

2.3.2 Comment and discuss the effectiveness of this image. (2)

Expected Answer	Point Allocation Explanation
The image is effective as it highlights the absurdity and dehumanisation of the landlady's racial stereotyping **(1)**. By reducing human skin colour to common food items, it strips the speaker's identity of its complexity and reduces it to a trivial, consumer choice **(1)**. / It shows the speaker's sarcasm/anger/wit, as he forces the landlady to confront her own simplistic and ridiculous prejudice **(1)**.	**2 Marks:** Award 1 mark for discussing the effect (e.g., absurdity, trivialisation, sarcasm) and 1 mark for explaining *why* it is effective (e.g., reducing identity to food/consumer items).

2.4 Refer to lines 34 – 35: "Madam," I pleaded, "wouldn't you rather/ See for yourself?" Critically discuss how these lines convey a central message of the poem. (3)

Expected Answer	Point Allocation Explanation
Central Message: The poem critiques the arbitrary and destructive nature of racism. **(1)**	**3 Marks:** Award 1 mark for identifying the central message (racism is absurd/superficial). Award 1 mark for discussing the speaker's final action (invitation/challenge). Award 1 mark for explaining the impact of the irony/sarcasm (exposes the landlady's prejudice).
Discussion: The speaker ends his sarcastic, detailed physical description with an ironic invitation to the landlady to **"See for yourself" (1)**. This highlights the failure of judging people remotely based on race, forcing the landlady to face the individual and her own prejudice **(1)**.	

3.1 Refer to line 3: "then carry a somnambulant great dane" What does the word 'somnambulant' suggest about the feeling of the dog? (2)

Expected Answer	Point Allocation Explanation
Means **sleepwalking** / in a state of sleep **(1)**. This suggests the dog is drowsy, deeply relaxed, lethargic, or unwilling to move **(1)**.	**2 Marks:** Award 1 mark for the literal meaning of the word (sleepy/half-asleep) and 1 mark for the resulting condition (slow-moving, deeply relaxed, unresponsive to its surroundings).

3.2 Discuss the tone of the speaker in the poem. (2)

Expected Answer	Point Allocation Explanation
The tone is **humorous (1)**. The speaker describes the informal setting and the subsequent improvisation (socks in the ball) with an entertaining manner **(1)**.	**2 Marks:** Award 1 mark for identifying an appropriate tone (e.g., humorous/amused) and 1 mark for justifying it by referencing the casual or absurd events described in the poem.

3.3.1 Refer to line 7: "and it burst into flower and wobbled" Identify the figure of speech. (1)

Expected Answer	Point Allocation Explanation
Metaphor.	**1 Mark:** Award 1 mark for the correct figure of speech.

3.3.2 Comment and discuss the effectiveness of this image. (2)

Expected Answer	Point Allocation Explanation
It is effective because it describes the ball's **puncture** using a gentle, beautiful image **"flower"**, creating a sense of irony and softening the destruction. **(1)** This enhances the poem's light atmosphere **(1)**.	**2 Marks:** Award 1 mark for explaining the function (e.g., describes the bursting/puncture) and 1 mark for discussing the effect (e.g., irony, softening the destruction, or enhancing the comical mood).

3.4 Refer to Stanza 2. Discuss how the behaviour of the players enhances the mood of the poem. (3)

Expected Answer	Point Allocation Explanation
Mood/Attitude: The mood is one of **determination/commitment (1)**.	**3 Marks:** Award 1 mark for identifying the attitude/mood (resourcefulness/determination). Award 1 mark for describing the specific behaviour (improvisation using socks/underpants). Award 1 mark for explaining how this links to and enhances the core message/mood.
Discussion: When the ball is destroyed, the players show an immediate **resourcefulness** by quickly collecting **"old socks and underpants"** to stuff the leather casing **(1)**. This action enhances the determination showing the desire to play the game outweighs the need for proper equipment or professional standards **(1)**.	

4.1 What impression of nature is created in Stanza 1? (2)

Expected Answer	Point Allocation Explanation
An impression of **autumn/change/maturity (1)** is created through the reference to the **"yellow wood" (1)**. / It suggests a beautiful natural setting, yet contains a crucial challenge point **(2)**.	**2 Marks:** Award 1 mark for identifying the season/state of nature (autumn/old) and 1 mark for citing the textual evidence (**"yellow wood"**). OR 2 marks for a well-explained interpretation of the scene as a setting for a profound choice.

4.2 Refer to lines 6 – 7: “Then took the other … the better claim,” How do these lines reflect the speaker’s feelings in making a choice? (2)

Expected Answer	Point Allocation Explanation
The speaker is **uncertain / rationalising the decision (1)**. He takes the path as an **experiment/impulse**, trying to justify the choice by saying it had **"the better claim" (1)**.	**2 Marks:** Award 1 mark for identifying the feeling (uncertainty/rationalisation) and 1 mark for explaining how the wording ("better claim") shows his immediate need to justify his decision.

4.3.1 Refer to line 8: “Because it was grassy and wanted wear” Identify the figure of speech in this line. (1)

Expected Answer	Point Allocation Explanation
Personification.	**1 Mark:** Award 1 mark for the correct figure of speech.

4.3.2 Comment and discuss the effectiveness of this image. (2)

Expected Answer	Point Allocation Explanation
It is effective because it gives the path a **human desire(1)**, making the speaker feel compelled to choose the less-used path. This justifies his choice by making it seem less selfish **(1)**.	**2 Marks:** Award 1 mark for explaining the personified action (the path "wants" to be used) and 1 mark for discussing the effect (e.g., justifies the speaker's choice).

4.4 Refer to line 16: “I shall be telling this with a sigh” Discuss the ambiguity of the word ‘sigh’ and how it relates to the poem. (3)

Expected Answer	Point Allocation Explanation
Ambiguity: The "sigh" is ambiguous because it can imply either **relief/satisfaction/pride (1)**, suggesting the choice was successful, **OR regret/nostalgia/resignation (1)**, implying he wonders about the path not taken.	**3 Marks:** Award 1 mark for explaining the two possible interpretations of "sigh" (satisfaction AND regret/ambiguity). Award 1 mark for linking the ambiguity to the core message. Award 1 mark for the critical discussion/synthesis.
Discussion: This ambiguity relates to the poem's central message: that the final choice becomes more important in the *telling* than in the moment of choosing **(1)**. The speaker's future **"sigh"** creates a powerful narrative of individualistic choice ("less travelled by"), even though the paths were nearly identical, reflecting the human need to decide with meaning.	

5.1.1 Refer to lines 1 – 12. Identify the structure of the poem. (1)

Expected Answer	Point Allocation Explanation
The poem is composed of three stanzas of four lines each / three quatrains. **(1)**	**1 Mark:** Award 1 mark for the correct structural description.

5.1.2 What is the rhyme scheme of Stanza 1? (1)

Expected Answer	Point Allocation Explanation
a b a b (Alternate rhyme). **(1)**	**1 Mark:** Award 1 mark for the correct rhyme scheme.

5.2 Refer to line 5: "Your harsh memory it did stink" What does this line reveal about the speaker's feelings? (2)

Expected Answer	Point Allocation Explanation
The speaker feels intense **disgust (1)** towards the memory. The harsh sensory diction (**"stink"**) reveals that the memory is unpleasant to the speaker **(1)**.	**2 Marks:** Award 1 mark for identifying the strong negative feeling (disgust/hatred) and 1 mark for explaining that the memory is toxic or severely unpleasant to the speaker.

5.3.1 Refer to Stanza 2. Identify the figure of speech in line 7: "And as I hinted it did wink" (1)

Expected Answer	Point Allocation Explanation
Personification.	**1 Mark:** Award 1 mark for the correct figure of speech.

5.3.2 Discuss what Stanza 2 reveals about the difficulty of moving on. (2)

Expected Answer	Point Allocation Explanation
Moving on is difficult because the **memory/feeling is contradictory (1)**. It is both repulsive (**"stink"**) and actively alluring (**"wink"**), meaning the speaker is caught between knowing the memory is painful and feeling the pull of the missed "deep" feelings **(1)**.	**2 Marks:** Award 1 mark for identifying the conflict of the memory (stinks but winks) and 1 mark for explaining how this reveals the internal struggle of letting go.

5.4 Refer to Stanza 1 – 3. Critically discuss the speaker's change in tone in Stanza 1 to Stanza 3. (3)

Expected Answer	Point Allocation Explanation
Stanza 1 Tone: The tone is initially one of **resignation / forced optimism (1)**, as the speaker admits to attempting to forget ("writ you off") but is still affected by **"trife melancholy"** (sadness).	**3 Marks:** Award 1 mark for identifying the initial tone (sadness/resignation). Award 1 mark for identifying the final tone (triumph/resolution/joy). Award 1 mark for critically discussing the transition (the movement from internal struggle/pain to external declaration of final freedom).
Stanza 3 Tone: The tone shifts dramatically to **triumph (1)**, evidenced by the declaration of **"truth"** and the embracing of **"abundancy"** and **"Released forever morn"**.	
Discussion: The shift is effective as it marks the speaker's success in moving from the internal, conflicted past to a definitive, positive, and forward-looking state of freedom, providing a sense of closure **(1)**.	

QUESTION 6a: ESSAY QUESTION (DISGUISE AND DECEPTION)

Topic: Disguise and deception are used to reveal the underlying reality of the characters in William Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*.

The essay must agree with the statement, discussing a minimum of three distinct examples of disguise/deception and how they reveal a character's true nature.

Key Area	Focus of Discussion (Revealed Reality)	Textual Support / Evidence
Portia's Disguise	**Intelligence, Autonomy, and Courage:** The disguise as the male lawyer, **Balthazar**, reveals that Portia's real power lies in her quick-witted intellect and legal knowledge, which are otherwise hidden by her subservient role as a wealthy heiress in Belmont.	Her masterful manipulation of the law against Shylock ("a pound of flesh," but "no jot of blood") and her command over the court.
The Ring Trick	**Husbands' Superficiality and Loyalty:** The deception involving the rings (given to Bassanio and Gratiano in disguise) reveals the underlying triviality of their marriage vows compared to their loyalty to male friendship (Antonio) and their inability to keep a simple promise.	Bassanio's willingness to give up the ring to Balthazar, justifying it as a debt to the saviour of his friend.

Jessica's Disguise/Deception	**Desire for Escape and Betrayal:** Jessica's deception of her father by disguising herself as a page and stealing his ducats and the turquoise ring reveals her desperate reality: her complete alienation from her father and her desire to assimilate into the hedonistic Christian society of Venice.	Running away with Lorenzo; her exchange of Shylock's ring for a monkey; the theft of the gold.
Shylock's Deception of Law	**Vengefulness and Pain:** Shylock's legal insistence on the bond is a deceptive manoeuvre that reveals the underlying reality of his overwhelming **vengefulness,** fuelled by years of persecution and Christian hypocrisy.	His consistent refusal of three times the amount; his plea: "I crave the law."

QUESTION 6b: ESSAY QUESTION (COURTROOM CLIMAX AND PREJUDICE)

Topic: The courtroom scene is a dramatic climax where many characters' true natures are revealed using the ceremonial appearance of justice to expose the harsh reality of prejudice.

The essay must agree with the statement, discussing how the ceremonial justice exposes the true nature of a minimum of three characters.

Key Character	Revealed True Nature	Exposed Harsh Reality / Prejudice
Shylock	**Rigid, Vengeful, and Wounded:** His unwavering demand for the pound of flesh, despite the overwhelming risk and financial offers, reveals his ultimate emotional bankruptcy and the depth of his desire for retribution.	The prejudice is revealed when the "mercy" offered by the Christians (forgiveness of debt) turns into a far more brutal punishment: **forced conversion and seizure of property**. Justice is denied.
Portia (as Balthazar)	**Sharp Intellect and Legalistic Ruthlessness:** Her use of legal technicality ("no drop of blood") reveals her formidable intellect, but also her willingness to use the precise letter of the law to destroy Shylock, thereby upholding the **prejudiced Christian power structure**.	She uses the law to ensure the Christian community's financial integrity, exposing that her "quality of mercy" is selective and primarily for her own community.

Antonio/The Duke	**Christian Hypocrisy and Bigotry:** Antonio's final demand for Shylock's conversion and the Duke's failure to intervene with actual mercy reveal that their public posturing about justice is a ceremonial cover for systemic prejudice.	The court offers no true neutrality; it is fundamentally biased against Shylock. Antonio's actions prove that the Venetian sense of 'mercy' applies only to those who conform to Christian norms.
Bassanio	**Recklessness and Devotion:** His willingness to sacrifice his money and even his wife reveals his profound, if impulsive, devotion to Antonio.	He is ultimately dependent on the disguised Portia to save him/Antonio, confirming his character is driven by emotional ties rather than statecraft or independence.

7.1 Place this extract in context. (2)

Expected Answer	Point Allocation Explanation
The extract takes place on the night of the Venetian masked ball/revelry **(1)**. It is the crucial moment where **Jessica flees her father Shylock's house** and family, disguised as a boy, to elope with her Christian lover, Lorenzo **(1)**.	**2 Marks:** Award 1 mark for the setting/event (Masked Ball/Night) and 1 mark for the pivotal action (Jessica's escape/elopement).

7.2 Refer to lines 4 – 6: "Lorenzo certain, and my love indeed— /For who … whether I am yours?" Explain what these lines reveal about Jessica's feelings towards Lorenzo. (2)

Expected Answer	Point Allocation Explanation
These lines reveal her **absolute devotion and sincerity (1)** to Lorenzo ("my love indeed," "who love I so much?"). The question of being **"yours"** suggests she has committed her entire identity/future to him **(1)**, emphasising the totality of her surrender/commitment.	**2 Marks:** Award 1 mark for identifying the intense feeling (devotion/passion) and 1 mark for explaining the depth of the commitment/surrender of her previous life.

7.3 Refer to line 8: “Here, catch this casket. It is worth the pains.” Do you agree with Jessica’s actions? Refer to events in the play to support your answer. (2)

Expected Answer	Point Allocation Explanation
Answer requires a motivation for either agreement or disagreement.	**2 Marks:** Award 1 mark for the explanation (agree/disagree) and 1 mark for the justified textual reference.
AGREE: Her actions are justified because she is escaping the severe domestic tyranny and isolation imposed by her father, Shylock, who treated his home like a prison **(1)**. + Textual Evidence **(1)**	
DISAGREE: Her actions are not justified because she steals a large portion of her father's wealth, including the cherished turquoise ring, thus committing an unforgivable act of betrayal/theft **(1)**. + Textual Evidence **(1)**	

7.4 Refer to lines 9 – 14. Explain the metaphor in the line, "But love is blind," and what this suggests about Jessica's current actions or perception. (3)

Expected Answer	Point Allocation Explanation
Metaphor: The metaphor means that when a person is deeply in love, they are figuratively **"blind" to the flaws, imperfections, or foolishness (1)** of themselves or their lover.	**3 Marks:** Award 1 mark for explaining the metaphor (love overlooks flaws). Award 1 mark for linking it to her disguise. Award 1 mark for discussing how it serves as a rationalisation for her extreme actions.
Suggestion: She is aware that her current action of running away, stealing, and being **"transformèd to a boy"** makes her appear ridiculous or shameful **(1)**. She uses the metaphor to rationalise these extreme choices, implying that the sincerity of her love for Lorenzo makes him incapable of judging these **"pretty follies" (1)**.	

7.5 Refer to lines 1 – 2: “Let me choose/ For as I am, I live upon the rack.”

7.5.1 For what reason must Bassanio choose? (1)

Expected Answer	Point Allocation Explanation
He must choose one of the three **caskets** (gold, silver, or lead) as per Portia’s deceased father's will, which will determine whether he wins or loses Portia as his wife **(1)**.	**1 Mark:** Award 1 mark for correctly identifying the context of the casket/will choice.

7.5.2 Why do you think this choice tortures him? Refer to events in the play to support your answer. (2)

Expected Answer	Point Allocation Explanation
The choice tortures him because the stakes are incredibly high **(1)**: choosing incorrectly means he must leave Belmont immediately and is bound by oath never to court any other woman, thus losing Portia forever and risking his financial and romantic future **(1)**.	**2 Marks:** Award 1 mark for identifying the high emotional stakes (fear of loss) and 1 mark for referencing the condition of the will/oath (losing Portia and leaving).

7.6 Refer to lines 3 – 4: "Then confess/ What treason there is mingled with your love." Explain the effect of using the words 'confess' and 'treason' in these lines. (2)

Expected Answer	Point Allocation Explanation
Portia uses dramatic diction associated with interrogation and legal danger (**"rack," "confess," "treason"**) **(1)**. This creates a humorous, heightened tone, implying that Bassanio's intense anguish must be caused by a severe, life-threatening crime/betrayal, rather than simple romantic anxiety, which contrasts with his real feelings **(1)**.	**2 Marks:** Award 1 mark for identifying the legal/torturous connotations and 1 mark for explaining the effect (heightened drama/humour/contrast).

7.7 Refer to line 8: "'Tween snow and fire, as treason and my love." Identify the TWO contrasting elements and how they reflect Bassanio's feelings. (3)

Expected Answer	Point Allocation Explanation
Contrasting Elements: Snow and **fire (1)**.	**3 Marks:** Award 1 mark for identifying both elements. Award 1 mark for linking the contrast to the incompatibility of ideas (love vs. treason). Award 1 mark for explaining the reflection of his feelings (absolute sincerity/assurance).
Reflection: He uses this opposition (which cannot coexist) to argue that his love is pure and sincere **(1)**. He believes that **treason/betrayal** can no more exist alongside his genuine love than fire can exist with snow, showing his absolute assurance in the **purity and truth** of his feelings, despite his anxiety about the choice **(1)**.	

7.8 Place this extract in context. (2)

Expected Answer	Point Allocation Explanation
The extract takes place immediately after the climax of the Trial Scene in Venice **(1)**. Bassanio and Antonio have followed the lawyer to insist on offering a reward/payment as a tribute for saving Antonio's life **(1)**.	**2 Marks:** Award 1 mark for the immediate setting (after the trial) and 1 mark for the action (Bassanio/Antonio trying to pay the lawyer).

7.9 Refer to line 1: "Dear sir, of force I must attempt you further." Why does Bassanio address Portia as 'sir'? (1)

Expected Answer	Point Allocation Explanation
Bassanio addresses Portia as 'sir' because she is still disguised as the **male (1)**.	**1 Mark:** Award 1 mark for referencing the disguise (male lawyer).

7.10 Refer to lines 5 – 8: "You press me far and … Do not draw back your hand." Explain why Bassanio behaves in this manner. (2)

Expected Answer	Point Allocation Explanation
Bassanio draws his hand back because the ring is a **symbol of his marriage vow** to his wife, Portia **(1)**. He had promised Portia never to sell or lose the ring, and he is trying to keep this promise **(1)**.	**2 Marks:** Award 1 mark for identifying the ring as a symbol of the marriage vow and 1 mark for explaining his fear of breaking the oath.

7.11 Analyse the significance of the rings in ACT 5. How do Portia and Nerissa use these objects to regain control and leverage over their husbands? (3)

Expected Answer	Point Allocation Explanation
Regaining Control/Leverage: Portia and Nerissa use the rings as proof to expose their husbands' broken vows **(1)**, leading Bassanio and Gratiano to fear they have been unfaithful/unloyal.	**3 Marks:** Award 1 mark for the action (exposing broken vows/creating fear of infidelity). Award 1 mark for the revelation (their identity). Award 1 mark for the result (reasserting control/superiority).
Revelation and Power: This power play allows the wives to reveal the **truth of their disguise** as the lawyers who saved Antonio, thus establishing their superior intellect **(1)**.	
Reassertion of Power: By forcing the men to swear again (and to Antonio as surety) to never part with the rings, the women **reassert moral and domestic control/leverage** over their husbands for the future **(1)**.	