

## C1 Mark Scheme - *Growing Pains*

Read lines 1 – 10.

0.1 List five examples of poor student behaviour in lesson.

[5]

Award **one mark** for each point and/or inference identified by the candidate, **to a maximum of five**:

- Students were throwing 'paper missiles'.
- There was no 'actual learning' happening OR 'lack of work done'.
- Students had been taking turns to 'whistle'.
- A boy was 'not even pretending to listen'.
- A boy was 'smirking' at the teacher OR 'sneering' at the teacher.
- A boy was looking at him with 'contempt' OR 'judgemental eyes'.
- A boy was 'chewing gum'.
- A boy had his 'feet on chair'.
- A boy was 'answering back'.
- A boy made a 'theatrical slam of the door' as he left the room.

No mark should be awarded for unabridged quotation of whole sentences.

Read lines 11 – 19.

0.2 How does the writer show Conor's thoughts and feelings here?

[5]

Some points that candidates may explore:

- Conor is impatient 'tapped his foot rapidly'- adverb showing his urgency (wanting to get out of there) - and thinks Mr Smith needs to 'hurry up'.
- Conor feels frustrated/ angry and full of 'resentment' – simile describes how his heart pounded 'like the drum of resentment' – suggests he is overwhelmed with bitterness and is physically pumped up with fury.
- Conor thinks it was unfair, an 'injustice' that he was sent out.
- Conor thinks he has been singled out / 'picked on' – and sees himself as a victim (blameless)
- Conor thinks his detention was unreasonable as 'everyone else had been talking'. – question shows he is having the argument in his head.
- Conor thinks the class is a 'joke' and the lesson were 'chaotic'.
- Conor usually enjoyed the 'anarchy' and 'mayhem' of these cover lessons but he did not enjoy it today.
- Conor feels the detention is an 'irritation' / an annoyance
- Conor thinks his supply teacher Mr Smith is 'inept' and calls him 'Mr Useless' – adjectives show he thinks Mr Smith is hopeless / incompetent as a teacher.
- Conor feels 'hungry' and thinks his lunch was 'practically decades ago' – exaggeration might suggest self pity
- Conor thinks Mr Smith is an 'idiot' for taking 'so long' to do the detention slip
- Conor feels melodramatic, like a victim, and wants Mr Smith to see how he is annoyed 'rolling his eyes dramatically'.

Overview

- Identifies Conor as feeling aggravated as the other students did not get punished for their behaviour. Perceptive students might notice Conor's lack of insight into his own behaviour (immaturity and irresponsibility) and how he blames Mr Smith for the behaviour of the class.

**Read lines 20 – 31.**

0.3 What impression does the writer create of Mr Smith?

[10]

Some points that candidates may explore:

- Mr Smith seems fraught / distracted at the end of the lesson 'trying desperately to focus'.
- He is drained by the 'brutal' and 'merciless' students – feels he has lost a battle.
- He seems tired 'as if he had run a marathon' – simile shows he is weary/exhausted
- Mr Smith had been a 'highly respected maths teacher' / 'excellent reputation' showing he was not always so bad at teaching – used to be brilliant.
- Mr Smith clearly loves Margo 'beloved' and seems concerned about her illness. Likes cover as he can visit her in the hospital 'everyday for several hours'.
- He needed money to help Margo so took the supply job as 'handy'.
- He thought he would just have to teach and not do any work at home 'rock up, teach and leave'.
- Learned that the students had no respect for cover teachers (supply) because they did not mark or plan and were not 'proper teacher' in the eyes of the students.
- Mr Smith admits it was a 'painful blow to his ego' that he was so 'useless' in RE lessons. His lack of knowledge meant he had no enthusiasm, and so he got no respect 'year 11 students knew it'.
- He had viewed himself as a very good teacher 'magical maths personality' and 'enthusiasm and knowledge' so was great at teaching maths.
- Year 11 students 'ate him for breakfast' – shows his feeling of powerlessness.
- He is embarrassed 'ashamed' at how bad he is at teaching RE
- He knows his nickname is Mr Useless and is hurt by this.

**Overview**

- Contrast of an excellent respected maths teacher but a poor RE supply teacher. He was unprepared for how hard it would be. Writer creates sympathy, perhaps, especially as he is doing the supply job to help support his sick wife.

**Read lines 32 to the 57.**

0.4 How does the writer make these lines tense and dramatic?

[10]

Some points that candidates may explore:

- Prior conflict create tension but Conor notices something is wrong
- At the start, tension between characters and Conor still very angry 'glared' and 'disgust curled his lip into a sneer'.
- Conor self-centred and intends to 'stomp dramatically' out of the room. He thinks his feelings are the most important 'show his outrage'.
- Notices Mr Smith's face – 'sweating ... a lot' and lips were a 'pinkish blue' - foreshadows something is wrong with Mr Smith
- Conor's mood changes – 'rage subsided' as his brain tried to notice what was wrong with the picture, simile Mr Smith's hand 'like it had frozen in place'.
- Conor notices Mr Smith had not 'yet spoken a word' so asks him if he is 'alright' – Questioning shows his growing concern as he notices teacher is now 'ashen and pale'.
- Structurally, narrative viewpoint now shifts to Mr Smith – who is also realising he is deeply unwell.
- Dramatic symptoms of the heart attack – 'chest felt constricted' with description 'a rope was cutting off his air' – makes reader imagine his feelings
- The increase in pain and pressure 'tighter and tighter' and 'squeezing him' all create claustrophobic idea of lack of air/oxygen / suffocating /can't breathe
- Then pain shoots down his left arm 'tortuous pain' suggest it is agony
- His reaction to the sudden pain is to grasp pen so hard it broke in his hand – dramatically showing he is breaking too
- Realisation that something is 'terribly wrong' and that he is 'struggling to gasp' for air.
- Mr Smith tries to communicate with Conor but does not even know his name. 'croaked' shows his attempts to talk failed due to the 'fierce dart of pain' which 'crippled' him

- He tries to loosen up his shirt and tie so he can breathe better but feels another 'wave' of pain, like the pain will drown him
  - Lack of oxygen causes him to see 'pink dots' – blurry vision
  - Mr Smith thinks Conor 'the boy' hated him and would not get help and would 'watch him die!' Mr Smith assumes the worst of Conor because of their earlier conflict. Writer creates drama as reader does not know what Conor will do.
  - Metaphorically 'fear swamped' Mr Smith's brain – he is overwhelmed with panic that he is going to die.
  - Mr Smith losing control and slips off his chair onto the carpet on the floor.
  - Narrative perspective shifts again to Conor who takes action to help Mr Smith. Conor is shown as caring as he ensures Mr Smith does not hurt himself 'carefully, almost gently' and puts him into 'recovery position'
  - Conor could get expelled 'certain expulsion' for using the 'scary' on 'call alarm' – Writer emphasises rules 'staff only!' to show Conor was breaking them. But Conor does the right thing - 'worth the risk' in order to get medical help and uses his first aid training 'removed the tie' and 'checked' breathing.
  - Mr Smith's eyes 'pools of terror' from Conor's point of view (Dramatic irony as Conor does not know Mr Smith thinks Conor might hates him/would watch him die)
  - Conor's mood now totally sympathetic to 'old man' and all the anger 'vanished'. He instinctively tries to copy how adults behave in the situation (from TV and films) with a 'calm smile and reassuring tone'.
  - Conor tries to comfort Mr Smith 'grasped Mr Smith's hand into his own' and told him he'd be 'as right as rain' – a lie they both know, but Conor trying to do the right thing.
- Overview:
- Reader gets insight into the events from narrative perspective of both characters. The reader is all-knowing while characters do not understand each other **yet**.

**To answer this question you need to focus on lines 58 to the end and also consider the passage as a whole.**

0.5 "The writer makes it clear that the events helped Conor to mature and grow up." To what extent do you agree with this statement? [10]

Some points that candidates may evaluate:

From the whole text:

- At the start, Conor seems like a naughty lad – he enjoys cover lessons for the 'chaos' and 'anarchy' and puts his feet up on chairs, chew gum
- Conor takes no responsibility for getting sent out / detention – his own actions. He sees it as 'unfair' since all the other students were also misbehaving. Outraged.
- Conor is judgemental of Mr Smith as a teacher 'idiot' and 'useless' – does not see him as a person. Looks at him with 'disgust' as if Conor feels he is better than Mr Smith.
- Conor acts melodramatically to convey his anger - slams doors, rolls eyes, stomps. Seems very self-centred and only caring about what he thinks and feels.
- Conor during the crisis begins to change. Slowly starts to notice something wrong with Mr Smith / observant
- Asks Mr Smith if he is 'alright' – showing some decency here. Caring and gentle when Mr Smith collapses
- Fearless in doing right thing – regardless of consequences presses red button to call for staff help
- Unsure territory – lets go of anger but not sure how to feel
- Pretend to be like the adults from TV – mimicking reassuring behaviour / doesn't come naturally.

From lines 58 to the end:

- Wonders who 'Margo' could be. Series of questions shows he is thinking of Mr Smith as a human begins with a life outside the classroom

- Realises the Mr Smith is a 'real person' maybe with family and loved-ones. Stops seeing him as his enemy and sees him as a man 'in pain who needed him'
- Feels awkward in front of the teachers 'insignificance' as he sees these 'authoritarian adults' as knowing what to do. But 'stays' – fights against his own discomfort for the good of Mr Smith
- Knows Mr Smith still needs him there. Comforting Mr Smith and talking to him. Recognises there is now a bond between them like an invisible string
- Dialogue shows he is maturing – no longer a 'sulky teenager' but now acting like 'a composed young man'.
- Really cares now about Mr Smith – adverbs 'earnestly and sincerely reassuring' – not just playing the part of an adult but actually being an adult.
- Genuinely cares that Mr Smith pulls through – watches the ambulance until it 'disappeared from sight'.
- Although Mr Smith does not return to school, they communicate via a thank you card and letter.
- Conor uncomfortable with teacher praise 'declined and rebuffed' because he thinks he just did what anyone would do.
- Staff notice it has changed him – 'temper seemed more even and controlled' – perhaps he has reflected on the temper that got him into trouble with Mr Smith. Is it guilt?
- Conor now more 'respectful' to staff – realising they are real people. Less 'dramatic' – more mature.
- Conor doing 'good work' in lessons – contrast to behaviour in Mr Smith's class.

#### Overview

- offered at the end – something had 'shifted' in Conor's perspective of the world – started to be less self-absorbed and think more of others. No longer egotistical 'centre of the universe' and selfish. Now more thoughtful.
- Teachers see him more of a 'man' now than 'boy' – they recognise he has matured and grown up. Brush with life and death situation showed his best side and this is the side of his personality he wants to develop. Potential to be a good man!