

PLEASE NOTE: THIS POEM AND THE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS WERE TAKEN FROM A 2018 NCS EXAMINATION QUESTION PAPER.

'SEED' – Paula Meehan

1.1 The word, 'gloom' implies that the speaker is despondent/depressed/sad. The reference to a 'house where hope has died' suggests that she has experienced loss/suffering and as a result, feels dejected and despairing. Her view of the house reflects her sense of misery.

[Award 2 marks for any one idea well discussed OR any two relevant and distinct points.] (2)

1.2 The word, 'conspiracy' suggests plotting/scheming/colluding/working together in secrecy. It conveys the idea that the sun and the soil are working to bring about new life/nourish and germinate the seeds. [Award 2 marks for any two relevant and distinct points.] (2)

1.3 Personification: The petals of the flowers are compared to 'fingers'. They are holding precious raindrops which will help to nurture life. The imagery conveys gentleness/fragility/tenderness after the harshness of the storm.

OR

Simile: The raindrops are like a 'peace offering'/gift because they bring the promise of new life. There is a sense of optimism/hope because there is harmony/balance between the seasons. [Award 3 marks for any ONE image well discussed OR a brief description of both images.] (3)

1.4 VALID

Like the seed, the speaker has survived adversity/hard times. The seed is effortlessly/casually able to survive the harshness of winter. It has lain dormant and with the coming of spring the seed rejuvenates. Like the seed, the speaker is tenacious (persisting in existence); she has persevered and feels that there is hope in a new beginning.

OR

The speaker, lacking faith in God, places her faith in nature's ability to survive and renew itself. Nature fills her with optimism.

[Award 3 marks for any two ideas well discussed OR any three distinct ideas.] (3)

[10]