7.5 Shades of Meaning: 30-minute Pack

about 30 minutes

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions.

The Talent Show Final

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Zara had been nervous all week, but by the time she stood in the wings on Friday evening, nervous did not begin to describe it. Her stomach churned, her hands trembled, and she felt genuinely terrified.

Onstage, the compere bellowed the next act's name into the microphone, and the audience erupted into applause. Zara crept towards the curtain, peering through the gap. Marcus, the reigning champion, strolled onto the stage as though he owned it, grinning at the crowd.

'You'll be brilliant,' whispered her friend Priya, squeezing her arm. Zara managed a thin smile. She thought Priya's confidence was sweet, if a little misplaced.

When her name was finally announced, Zara did not walk onto the stage - she marched, chin up, refusing to let her legs shake where anyone could see. The first few notes of her song wobbled, but by the chorus her voice had settled into something clear and strong.

Afterwards, the judges' comments ranged from polite to glowing. One called her performance 'adequate'. Another said it was 'outstanding'. Marcus, watching from the side, offered a stiff, grudging nod rather than the warm applause he had given the other finalists.

Zara did not win first place, but she left the stage feeling something better than relief: a quiet, solid pride that no scoreboard could measure.

1 Look at these words as they are used in the passage above. For each word, identify whether its connotation here is positive, negative or neutral.

(a) terrified **(1)**

- ☐ A) Positive connotation
- ☐ B) Negative connotation
- ☐ C) Neutral connotation

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(b) glowing **(1)**

- [ ] A) Positive connotation
- [ ] B) Negative connotation
- [ ] C) Neutral connotation

(c) grudging **(1)**

- [ ] A) Positive connotation
- [ ] B) Negative connotation
- [ ] C) Neutral connotation

(d) adequate **(1)**

- [ ] A) Positive connotation
- [ ] B) Negative connotation
- [ ] C) Neutral connotation

(e) warm (describing the applause) **(1)**

- [ ] A) Positive connotation
- [ ] B) Negative connotation
- [ ] C) Neutral connotation

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2 Which term describes a word's exact, literal, dictionary meaning, without any of the feelings or attitudes it might suggest?

- [ ] A) Connotation
- [ ] B) Register
- [ ] C) Denotation
- [ ] D) Synonym

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3 Word bank (all ways of saying 'begin'):

kick off	get going	begin	start	commence	inaugurate

Sort each word or phrase in the bank by its REGISTER: informal, neutral or formal.

(a) kick off **(1)**

- [ ] A) Informal
- [ ] B) Neutral
- [ ] C) Formal

(b) get going **(1)**

- [ ] A) Informal
- [ ] B) Neutral
- [ ] C) Formal

(c) begin **(1)**

- [ ] A) Informal
- [ ] B) Neutral
- [ ] C) Formal

(d) start **(1)**

- [ ] A) Informal
- [ ] B) Neutral
- [ ] C) Formal

(e) commence **(1)**

- [ ] A) Informal
- [ ] B) Neutral
- [ ] C) Formal

(f) inaugurate **(1)**

- [ ] A) Informal
- [ ] B) Neutral
- [ ] C) Formal

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4 The paragraph below uses the word 'good' three times. Rewrite it, replacing each 'good' with a different, more precise word that fits its context. Do not use the same replacement word twice.

'The film was good. The acting was good, and the special effects were good too.'

(3)

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5 Write one sentence of your own for each instruction below, set in a context of your choice.

(a) Write a sentence using a word with a strongly POSITIVE connotation to describe someone who is clever (not simply the word 'clever'). **(1)**

(b) Write a sentence using a word with a NEGATIVE connotation for the same idea of being clever, suggesting the cleverness is used in an untrustworthy way. **(1)**

(c) Write a sentence using a FORMAL synonym for 'said'. **(1)**

(d) Write a sentence using an INFORMAL synonym for 'said'. **(1)**

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6 The words below all mean 'angry', but with different intensity. Write them in order, from the mildest to the most intense: furious, annoyed, enraged, irritated

(2)

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7 In each pair below, one word has a STRONGER connotation than the other. Tick the word with the stronger connotation in each pair.

(a) nervous / terrified **(1)**

- ☐ nervous
- ☐ terrified

(b) said / bellowed **(1)**

- ☐ said
- ☐ bellowed

(c) walked / marched **(1)**

- ☐ walked
- ☐ marched

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8 Look again at the sentence: 'Onstage, the compere bellowed the next act's name into the microphone.' Explain why 'bellowed' is a more effective word choice here than 'said'.

(2)

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9 Look again at the sentence: 'Zara crept towards the curtain, peering through the gap.' Explain the effect of the writer's choice of 'crept' rather than 'walked'.

(2)

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10 Write a short descriptive paragraph (approximately 60-90 words) about a moment of triumph or disappointment in a sporting or performance event of your own choosing. Your writing must include: one word with a strongly positive connotation, one word with a strongly negative connotation used to describe a similar idea, one example of formal register, and one precise, carefully chosen verb used instead of a vague verb such as 'said', 'went' or 'looked'. Underline and label each of these four features in your answer.

(10)

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Mark scheme · 7.5 Shades of Meaning: 30-minute Pack

Question 1

(a) B ticked (terrified - negative, suggests intense fear) cao — **B1**

(a) Answer: **B) Negative connotation**

(b) A ticked (glowing - positive, highly complimentary) cao — **B1**

(b) Answer: **A) Positive connotation**

(c) B ticked (grudging - negative, suggests reluctance and resentment) cao — **B1**

(c) Answer: **B) Negative connotation**

(d) C ticked (adequate - neutral, means merely sufficient) cao — **B1**

(d) Answer: **C) Neutral connotation**

(e) A ticked (warm - positive, suggests genuine friendliness and approval) cao — **B1**

(e) Answer: **A) Positive connotation**

Question 2

C — **B1**

Answer: **C**

Question 3

(a) A ticked, cao — **B1**

(a) Answer: **A) Informal**

(b) A ticked, cao — **B1**

(b) Answer: **A) Informal**

(c) B ticked, cao — **B1**

(c) Answer: **B) Neutral**

(d) B ticked, cao — **B1**

(d) Answer: **B) Neutral**

(e) C ticked, cao — **B1**

(e) Answer: **C) Formal**

(f) C ticked, cao — **B1**

(f) Answer: **C) Formal**

Question 4

first 'good' (the film overall) replaced with a distinct, precise positive word, e.g. gripping, enjoyable, unforgettable — **B1**

second 'good' (the acting) replaced with a different, precise positive word, e.g. convincing, compelling, moving — **B1**

third 'good' (the special effects) replaced with a different, precise positive word, e.g. spectacular, stunning, dazzling, cao no word repeated — **B1**

Answer: **The film was gripping. The acting was convincing, and the special effects were spectacular too.**

Question 5

(a) any correct sentence using a word with a clearly positive connotation for cleverness, e.g. ingenious, brilliant, sharp-witted (oe) — **B1**

(a) Answer: **Her ingenious solution to the puzzle amazed the whole class.**

(b) any correct sentence using a word with a clearly negative connotation for cleverness, e.g. cunning, crafty, sly (oe) — **B1**

(b) Answer: **His cunning plan to swap the answer sheets was quickly discovered.**

(c) any correct sentence using a formal synonym for 'said', e.g. announced, declared, stated (oe) — **B1**

(c) Answer: **The headteacher announced that the school trip had been postponed.**

(d) any correct sentence using an informal synonym for 'said', e.g. reckoned, muttered, blurted (oe) — **B1**

(d) Answer: **Ben reckoned the film was rubbish before it had even started.**

Question 6

annoyed placed before irritated (the two mildest words in the correct relative order) — **B1**

furious placed before enraged (the two most intense words in the correct relative order), cao overall: annoyed, irritated, furious, enraged — **B1**

Answer: **annoyed, irritated, furious, enraged**

Question 7

(a) terrified ticked cao — **B1**

(a) Answer: **terrified**

(b) bellowed ticked cao — **B1**

(b) Answer: **bellowed**

(c) marched ticked cao — **B1**

(c) Answer: **marched**

Question 8

identifies that 'bellowed' suggests a loud, forceful, attention-grabbing way of speaking, unlike the neutral 'said' — **B1**

links this to effect, e.g. it captures the excitement and showmanship of the talent show atmosphere, helping the reader hear the noise and energy of the moment (oe) — **B1**

Answer: **'Bellowed' suggests a loud, forceful way of speaking rather than the neutral 'said'; this captures the excitement and showmanship of the talent show, helping the reader hear the noise and energy of the moment rather than just being told information was given.**

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Question 9

identifies that 'crept' suggests moving quietly, cautiously and almost secretively, unlike the neutral 'walked' **B1**

links this to effect, e.g. it reveals Zara's nervousness and reluctance to be noticed, contrasting with Marcus's confident strolling later in the passage (oe) **B1**

Answer: **'Crept' suggests moving quietly and cautiously, almost as if trying not to be seen, rather than the plain 'walked'; this reveals how nervous and reluctant Zara feels, contrasting sharply with the confident way Marcus strolls onto the stage later in the passage.**

Question 10

AO5: Content and organisation (AO5)

Level 1 Simple description of the event; little sense of a consistent voice or organisation. **1-2**

Level 2 Some relevant, engaged description of the event; ideas are mostly sequenced clearly, with an attempt at a consistent voice. **3-4**

Level 3 Clear, engaging and convincing description of the event in a consistent, well-judged voice; well organised with a genuine sense of the writer's feelings and reactions. **5-6**

AO6: Technical accuracy (precision of word choice) (AO6)

Level 1 Fewer than two of the four required features are present, or they are used incorrectly. **1**

Level 2 Most of the four required features are present and mostly accurate, with occasional imprecise word choices. **2-3**

Level 3 All four required features are present, clearly marked and used accurately and effectively, with consistently precise vocabulary throughout. **4**

Indicative content:

- Paragraph uses a consistent first-person or third-person viewpoint and a consistent tense
- A word with a strongly positive connotation is used to describe the triumph or a positive feeling
- A word with a strongly negative connotation is used to describe the disappointment or a contrasting feeling
- One example of formal register is used appropriately within the description
- A precise, carefully chosen verb replaces a vague verb such as 'said', 'went' or 'looked'
- Underlining and labelling clearly identify all four required features
- Sense of atmosphere and the writer's feelings during the event, appropriate to a descriptive register

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