Year 10 | IB MYP English Literary Analysis

Student Practice Paper • Original fiction extract • 60 minutes • 40 marks

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Instructions: Read the extract carefully. Answer in full sentences. Support interpretations with short quotations. Focus on **how** the writer creates meaning, not just what happens. This is an IB MYP-inspired practice paper, not an official IB examination.

Section A | Read the extract

The Last Light in the Library — original passage

1 At five minutes to six, the library began to empty. Chairs scraped against the floor, footsteps faded down the corridor, and the clock above the doorway counted each second with unnecessary confidence.

2 Maya stayed at the corner table. In front of her lay a blank application form for the school writing competition. She had written her name at the top, then crossed it out so many times that the paper looked bruised.

3 Outside, rain pressed against the windows. The sports field had disappeared beneath a grey veil, and the buildings beyond it looked like unfinished sketches. Maya watched the water trace uncertain paths down the glass.

4 “You know the library closes at six,” said Mr Ellis, the librarian. His voice was gentle, but Maya folded the form as if she had been caught doing something wrong.

5 “I know. I just need another minute.”

6 Mr Ellis glanced at the page. “A competition?”

7 Maya shrugged. “Other people actually know how to write. I just write things down.”

8 He did not tell her she was talented. Instead, he switched off the bright ceiling lights, leaving a single lamp glowing over the table. The room changed at once: the tall shelves no longer looked like walls, but like quiet companions waiting to be asked a question.

9 “When I was your age,” he said, “I thought a first draft was supposed to be good.” He smiled. “That made it very difficult to begin.”

10 Maya unfolded the paper. The creases remained, cutting across the space where her story title should have been. She picked up her pen. For a moment it hovered above the page, a small dark bird uncertain where to land.

11 Then she wrote a sentence. It was clumsy and too long. She read it twice, resisted the urge to tear it up, and began another.

12 By the time the clock struck six, the rain had not stopped. But Maya no longer watched the window.

Section B | Understanding and analysing (24 marks)

1. Identify two details that establish the atmosphere at the beginning of the extract. Explain the mood they create. [4 marks]

2. What does the phrase “the paper looked bruised” suggest about Maya’s feelings? Analyse the effect of this metaphor. [4 marks]

3. Examine how the writer uses the rain and window imagery in paragraphs 3 and 12. How does its meaning develop? [6 marks]

4. How does Mr Ellis help Maya without directly praising her? Refer to his actions and dialogue. [4 marks]

5. Analyse the simile “a small dark bird uncertain where to land.” What does it reveal about Maya at this moment? [6 marks]

Section C | Extended literary response (16 marks)

6. How does the writer present Maya’s journey from self-doubt towards courage? Analyse at least **two** writer’s choices (such as imagery, setting, symbolism, dialogue, structure or contrast). Use short quotations and explain their effects. Write approximately 250–350 words. [16 marks]

Planning space: Claim / evidence / technique / effect / link

Extended response:

Self-check before submitting

■ I made an interpretation, not just a summary. ■ I used short quotations. ■ I named or described writer’s choices. ■ I explained how each choice shapes meaning. ■ My paragraphs link back to the question.