#### **Answer Feedback by Kevin Perera**

### **O Level English Literature**

'Love is not half as useful as Logic' - The Nightingale and the Rose.

# 1.CONTENT

#### 1.1 Evaluation

The first point you have made is about the theoretical knowledge of the student and how this seems to overpower his emotions. Your argument is about how love cannot be understood through rational thinking. However, the question is about whether love is useful. You make a point about how love is more useful because we cannot live without love. Yet taking the story into consideration you could have spoken about how love becomes more useful than logic in the story. So the first point, Even though it addresses love as being more Useful, the answer does not connect closely enough to the short story/question.

In the second stanza you clearly explain how the Nightingale represents ideal love and how the boy who is full of rational thinking and his philosophical ideas is unable to see the nightingale for its true beauty and worth. However once again you have not connected the happenings of the story to the theme that you are discussing. And even though you say or discuss what the Nightingale declares about love, you have not critically engaged with her character in the story to a satisfactory extent to show how her character is connected to the question. In the third paragraph or point you have spoken about the girl who is consumed by consumerism. Even though you mention how she does not understand what love is, you fail to explore how love is actually more useful than her understanding of logic.

The use of quotations can be significantly improved – while it is not a rule, it is better to use the quotation (which is your evidence) right after you mention the topic sentence, because, then the argument that you make will be clearly (for the reader) based on your quote. And it will also give you direction.

Also, the quotations are not used well enough – you have not elaborated on the significance of the quotations but have merely placed them where you think they may be useful, assuming that the reader will make the connection of it to the point that you make. However, remember that there is nothing that can just be assumed in a literary essay. Explain how your quotation is linked to the argument that you are making.

Here are a few ways that you could make the writing more compelling.

Point 1 – Mention how the logic/rationalism/philosophies of the boy does not do him any good when he tries to find the rose. He is left desperate and clueless without any street knowledge of what to do. IN his moment of need, his logic becomes futile. It is not useful at all. He buries his face in the grass and weeps!

Point 2 – We have the nightingale, who sees that the boy needs a red rose. In her sacrificial love, she produces a red rose which seemingly creates a possibility of romantic love. But, the point here is that the Love of the nightingale was able to create something out of the love she possessed unlike the logic of the boy which was rendered useless! The rose can be seen as a symbol of hope as it is what gave him a chance to court the respectable lady. Hope which was created by Love, not logic. SO, it becomes very clear that love is more potent than logic in this instance.

Point 3 – The girl uses logic – she is an advocate, a proponent of logci and rational thinking. She stands for capitalism and consumerism. Her description makes this clear: the little dog which propbably incurred exorbitant costs, the silver thread she possessed, reflect the consumerist mindset – the dog indicates how she is preoccupied with symbolical significance, as you said, the shallowness. But, her ruthless, nonchalant way of rejecting the boy even after her clear promise shows another side, which is linked to consumerism. She seeks profit over human relationships. Just like capitalism is based upon the logic of profit and it seeks to do any logical thing which makes the profit larger, she makes decisions not based on wisdom or love or even integrity, but a sharp and unyielding logic. But as you mentioned earlier, without love, life becomes a mere mechanical and empty existence. Therefore, even though her logic will get ger the maximum profits and the materials from the nephew, she would not find true happiness or love. Therefore, even her path is one that is full of misery and continuous greed.

Here, I would like to mention that the nightingale's point could come last, and that you could tweak your logic to make the answer more nuanced and precise. The thing is, as you mentioned earlier, the two are intertwined: we need both love and logic. You used the word balance and that is correct! So, the main answer to the question should/could have been that love and logic are both useful and are in fact crucial for a meaningful life. Here's why.

The result of the love and sacrifice of the nightingale (the valuable red rose) ends up in the gutter. She was obviously naaive in thinking that the boy was the lover that she was singing about; he obviously was not the ideal type of lover. So, the nightingale, even though she was so full of love, failed to employ her faculty of intellect (simply, she did not use her logical thinking – bird brains maybe). She fails to observe the boy for a little more time, fails to see beyond the melodramatic performance of his, and fails to realize that he does not even know how to admire the beauty and grace of her singing. The mistake of the Nightingale is that she was not logical enough to be more patient and shrewd in her assessment of this 'lover'.

>>>Here are the topic sentences of the essay that I would suggest, after a little bit of alteration.

- 1. The logic and philosophy of the boy is useless when it comes to finding the red rose, which was the only hope he had with her.
- 2. The girl represents consumerism and capitalism, which is based upon the logic of how to make more profit over the human emotions such as love; but in her pursuit of the materialistic she will lead a dissatisfied life which is useless, bringing no real joy.
- 3. The nightingale, representing ideal love, makes the ultimate sacrifice and this immense love she pours out is the only thing that is actually useful in the story because it produces the Red Rose, which is a symbol of hope for the desperate lover. But her failure to use logic in her choices results in her sacrifice and love being unceremoniously thrown into a gutter.

The above three points clearly shows that while the boy and the girl were full of logic of the knowledge-based kind and the profit-based kind, they were immature and blind about love; the nightingale, on the other hand, represented and poured out her real life as a sacrifice, but it was all in vain because she did not use caution and reasoning/logic. Therefore, it is clear that logic must be tempered with love, and that love must be viewed together with logic.

The heart and the mind should be guided by each other.

# 2. LANGUAGE

#### 2.1 Diction

The language choices are quite good and accurate – the use of words/phrases such as *solidify, insight, superficial, credibility, intellect, mechanical, subtle, deployed to portray* show strong vocabulary and fluency.

## 2.2 Sentence structure

Quite good but some sentences, the parallel structure is a little erroneous.

the professor's daughter. Her initial demand
match 'go with her dress and her
desire for 'real jewels' are all instances
desire for real favor this How a so
deployed to portray this. How a so

This is a complex, complicated sentence which is well used, but the first part should be something like: Her initial demand of him to get her a red rose...

Not the characters described by you. Rather, the characters that are analysed by you.

#### 2.3 Connectives / Discourse Markers

The use of connectives in this answer is quite good and you have used a number of these. Although, Lastly, In conclusion, Further etc.

Pursuit Spelling was wrong.

# 3.ORGANIZING

### 3.1 Paragraphing/Topic sentences

The topic sentences need some work. The first sentence itself should give the reader a clear idea about what the paragraph is about. If you can, read through the points you have made, and try to write the topic sentence for each.

The place of quotations in the paragraph is important as mentioned earlier, and the use of the PEE structure is the easiest to follow. Point Evidence Explanation. This way, the quote sheds light to the discussion that follows, for the reader and the writer too.

Another area is the weight that is put on each paragraph. The first one is strong but not so much the second and third. If you can develop these points also, that would be even better.

## 3.2 Introduction

While it is not an absolute necessity because the time-constraint, it is better if the introduction can provide the points you are going to address. To be able to do this, you have to have an idea about what you want to write for your answer. As in, you have to have a plan before you start writing the answer. Then, since you know the points you will write, you can give a very general idea like a roadmap to the answer, in your introduction.

### 3.2 Conclusion

It seems like you miss the point in the last sentence, or at least leave the reader in doubt about your stance. You said love is needed and more important. You said at the end that love is worth the sacrifice. There seems to be a contradiction. Try to see how you can make the conclusion strongly connected to the question.

FINALLY, you need to really digest the question before answering, otherwise you can digress. You seem to write about love and logic, but not necessarily about the usefulness about each one.

# Marks

Content 4/6 >>> Some concern about the essay not consistently connecting to the question.

Organizing 4/5 >>> Topic sentences and the placement of the quotation (and the engagement with these)

Language 4/4 >>> Good

12/15