**Exemplar Response Component 2 Section A: Slumdog Millionaire**

**1a) What do you understand by the social context of a film? (2)**

*This means the context in which a film is set. Where it takes place and what the character’s experiences are like due to their surroundings.*

**b) Briefly describe the main social context of your chosen film. (3)**

*The main social context of the film is that it is set in Mumbai; a very large city in India with significant deprivation and poverty. It’s a place where there is huge inequality and a large proportion of the citizens are illiterate, therefore affecting their ability to gain employment.*

**c) Explore how the narrative of your chosen film reflects its social context. In your answer you should consider:**

* *How key characters reflect the social context*
* *How the social context is built into the narrative*
* *At least one example from the film’s narrative which demonstrates its social context.* ***(15)***

*Both Jamal and Latika reflect the social context of the film as both have come from deprived and impoverished backgrounds. Right from the start of the film hierarchy and importance of status in Indian society is evident. The policeman who interviews, and later tortures, Jamal is of a far higher status and this is conveyed through his abuse of power and low key ominous lighting. He knows that no one will challenge his authority, whereas Jamal has always been the ‘underdog’ of the film’s title and he knows ‘his place’ in society. Latika also reflects the social context of the film as like many girls globally she is abused and manipulated and forced into a life of subservience and submission. Latika is often lit using high key lighting and saturated high value colour to convey her positivity and ambition. Right from the start of the narrative she has a desire to break away from the confinement of the slums and make a better life for herself. Her resilience is undeniable and we often see her in slow motion, conveying her importance in the narrative. She perhaps symbolizes the millions of children living in poverty, not just in India but around the world, fighting for a better life despite the obstacles in front of them. The narrative reflects the social context as the children’s terrible childhood experiences have had a huge impact on the directions their lives have taken. The adversity they suffer: abuse, poverty, and homelessness make them stronger and it is also these experiences which equip Jamal to answer the questions correctly on the TV gameshow. Perhaps the Director, Danny Boyle, is suggesting that life’s struggles may be tough but they can also help you become stronger, fight harder and love more deeply. An example from the film’s narrative which demonstrates its social context is the sequence where a young Jamal is prepared to jump into the cesspit below him in order to get his hero Bachchan’s autograph. The scene is metaphorical as it reflects the everyday struggles Jamal faces. He has to wade through the faeces life throws at him to ascend out of poverty. His low status and deprivation do not prevent him from aspiring for more in life – even if it is something as small as getting his hero’s autograph. The stark juxtaposition of Bacchan’s helicopter landing amidst the slums of Mumbai really encompasses the inequality and division in Indian society. Bachchan shows that some will find their way out of poverty but the vast majority will remain living in deprivation.*