

General Certificate of Education  
June 2003  
Advanced Level Examination



**ENGLISH LITERATURE (SPECIFICATION A)  
Unit 4**

**LTA4**

Monday 9 June 2003 9.00 am to 11.00 am

**In addition to this paper you will require:**  
a 12-page answer book.

Time allowed: 2 hours

**Instructions**

- Use blue or black ink or ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The *Examining Body* for this paper is AQA. The *Paper Reference* is LTA4.
- There are **two** sections:  
**Section A:** Drama Pre-1770  
**Section B:** Poetry Pre-1900  
You must answer two questions, **one** chosen from **each** section.

**Information**

- The books prescribed for this paper **may not** be taken into the examination room.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 40.
- All questions carry 20 marks.
- You will be assessed on your ability to use an appropriate form and style of writing, to organise relevant information clearly and coherently, and to use specialist vocabulary, where appropriate. The degree of legibility of your handwriting and the level of accuracy of your spelling, punctuation and grammar will also be taken into account.

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**SECTION A – Drama Pre-1770**

Answer **one** question from this section.

In this section, you must ensure that you consider in your answers:

- different interpretations of texts by other readers
  - your own informed, independent opinions.
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**EITHER***Othello* – William Shakespeare

- 1 “Shakespeare has created in Cassio and Roderigo two puppets merely for Iago’s use.”

“Cassio and Roderigo are cleverly contrasted as admirers of Desdemona.”

How far do you think the text supports each of these views about the roles of Cassio and Roderigo in the play?

**OR**

- 2 “*Othello* is a tragedy without meaning and that is the ultimate horror of it.”

“Because *Othello* and Iago are part of every single person in the audience, the play has meaning for everyone.”

What support can you find in the play for each of these opinions?

What impact has the play had on **you**?

**OR***Henry the Fourth Part 2* – William Shakespeare

- 3 “The scenes at the Boar’s Head Tavern provide much needed relief from the serious politics of the play.”

“Shakespeare included the scenes at the Boar’s Head Tavern so that his audience might share Prince Henry’s disgust at those who frequent it.”

Consider these opinions in relation to the Boar’s Head Tavern scenes.

What do **you** think is the purpose of these scenes?

**OR**

- 4 “The scenes in Gloucestershire exhibit the bad taste of a dramatist providing cheap laughs at the expense of country gentlemen who happen to be old.”

“Justices Shallow and Silence are silly old fools who provide a rich seam of comedy for an audience to enjoy.”

How far does the text of the play support each of these opinions?

How do **you** respond to these scenes?

**OR**

*The Merchant of Venice* – William Shakespeare

5 “Shakespeare presents Jessica as the tragic victim of a society divided by racial hatred.”

“Shakespeare shows us a Jessica who is as ruthless as her father.”

Show how far you would agree with these different views on Jessica in relation to your experience of the play.

What is **your** view of Shakespeare’s Jessica?

**OR**

6 “The casket scenes in *The Merchant of Venice* are tedious and predictable.”

“The casket scenes in the play reflect the central theme of the play: on what in life does one place value?”

What justification is there in the play to support each of these views?

How do **you** regard the casket scenes?

**OR**

*Noah and his Sons, The Second Shepherds’ Play and Herod the Great* from  
*The Complete Plays of the Wakefield Master*

7 “*The Second Shepherds’ Play* is the cry of poor shepherds suffering from the exploitation of the heartless landed aristocracy.”

“The play is about the simple devotion of simple men to Christian beliefs.”

How far can the text of the play support both these opinions?

What do **you** think is the central message of the play?

**OR**

8 “The verse-form used in *Herod the Great* makes a cruel play memorable and enjoyable.”

“There is an artificiality about the verse used in *Herod the Great* that makes the play unactable today.”

Examine the verse and argue what there is to be said to support these two assertions.

What is **your** opinion of the verse-form used in this play?

**Turn over ►**

**OR**

*The Duchess of Malfi* – John Webster

- 9 “Webster is a stern moral teacher whose characters are neatly arranged into the good and the bad.”

“Webster in *The Duchess of Malfi* presents life as a moral chaos where there is no justice, and no law either of God or man.”

How far does the play support each of these assertions?

What is **your** view of the ways Webster presents morality in the play?

**OR**

- 10 “Webster has realised the dark side of political power, the cruel grip of intelligence networks, the shocks of betrayal.”

How far does this opinion sum up what the play is really about?

**OR**

*Volpone* – Ben Jonson

- 11 “The real joy for an audience watching the play is Jonson’s amazing creation of Mosca.”

“Mosca is nothing but a loathsome parasite unscrupulously exploiting others.”

How far would you agree with each of these views?

What is **your** response to Jonson’s Mosca?

**OR**

- 12 “The end of the play is disappointing because harsh justice is meted out to characters who have given the audience huge pleasure.”

“Though today we might disagree with the severity of the sentences on the criminals at the end of the play, yet justice must prevail.”

Consider both these opinions in relation to the end of the play. What is there to support in each?

What is **your** view of the end of the play?

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**SECTION B – Poetry Pre-1900: The Romantic Period**

Answer **one** question from this section.

You are reminded that in this section of the paper you must demonstrate

- your understanding of the contexts that have shaped the writing and study of your chosen poetry
  - how that poetry was received at the time it was written
  - your grasp of the poetry and how it is presented
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**EITHER**

*Women Romantic Poets 1785–1832, An Anthology* – ed. Breen

- 13** Why are these women poets described as Romantic poets?

Illustrate your answer, referring to the subject matter and style of two or three poems of your choice from the *Anthology*.

**OR**

- 14** What do we discover from these poems about the attitudes of women at this time to love and romance?

In your answer, **either** analyse in detail two or three poems **or** range more widely across the *Anthology*, showing how your chosen poets present their attitudes.

**OR**

*The Prelude, Books 1 and 2* – William Wordsworth (OUP, ed. de Selincourt and Gill)

- 15** It is said that the Romantic poet celebrated “the exuberant sense of life of the natural human being”.

With reference to two or three passages, chosen where you wish from **one** or **both** of the *Books*, show how Wordsworth demonstrates this characteristic not only in the experiences he describes but also in the language he uses.

**OR**

- 16** Morality, according to Wordsworth, was a product of experience based on the effects of one’s environment upon one’s personal development.

Choose two or three passages from **one** or **both** of the *Books* where he discusses this idea.

How convincing do you find Wordsworth’s presentation of this opinion?

Turn over ►

**OR**

*Songs of Innocence and of Experience* – William Blake

- 17 Rousseau, whose writings Blake studied, argued that one of the principles that motivated human beings was a revulsion at seeing fellow human beings suffer and die.

How far do Blake's *Songs* reflect this view of Rousseau in their themes and language?

**OR**

- 18 A contemporary who knew Blake described him as eccentric and wild, but not mad.

How far do Blake's *Songs* confirm this view?

**OR**

*Selected Poems* – John Keats (Penguin Poetry Library, ed. Barnard)

- 19 How far do the poems of Keats in this selection show the interest of the Romantic poets in “nostalgia, intoxicating dreams and sweet and bitter melancholy”?

You may, if you wish, concentrate on one or two of these interests as illustrated in Keats' poetry or address all three.

**OR**

- 20 Keats believed that a poet should command “the knowledge of contrast, and the feeling for light and shade”.

How far does the poetry of Keats reflect this belief? You may, if you wish, refer in detail to **two** or **three** of his poems **or** range more widely through the selection.

**END OF QUESTIONS**