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# A-LEVEL English Literature B

7717/1A - PAPER 1A – Literary genres: Aspects of Tragedy

Mark scheme

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7717

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Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate analyses a number of students' scripts. Alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Assessment Writer.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of students' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

Further copies of this mark scheme are available from [aqa.org.uk](http://aqa.org.uk)

## Level of response marking instructions

Level of response mark schemes are broken down into levels, each of which has a descriptor. The descriptor for the level shows the average performance for the level. There are marks in each level.

Before you apply the mark scheme to a student's answer read through the answer and annotate it (as instructed) to show the qualities that are being looked for. You can then apply the mark scheme.

### Step 1 Determine a level

Start at the lowest level of the mark scheme and use it as a ladder to see whether the answer meets the descriptor for that level. The descriptor for the level indicates the different qualities that might be seen in the student's answer for that level. If it meets the lowest level then go to the next one and decide if it meets this level, and so on, until you have a match between the level descriptor and the answer. With practice and familiarity you will find that for better answers you will be able to quickly skip through the lower levels of the mark scheme.

When assigning a level you should look at the overall quality of the answer and not look to pick holes in small and specific parts of the answer where the student has not performed quite as well as the rest. If the answer covers different aspects of different levels of the mark scheme you should use a best fit approach for defining the level and then use the variability of the response to help decide the mark within the level, ie if the response is predominantly level 3 with a small amount of level 4 material it would be placed in level 3 but be awarded a mark near the top of the level because of the level 4 content.

### Step 2 Determine a mark

Once you have assigned a level you need to decide on the mark. The descriptors on how to allocate marks can help with this. The exemplar materials used during standardisation will help. There will be an answer in the standardising materials which will correspond with each level of the mark scheme. This answer will have been awarded a mark by the Lead Examiner. You can compare the student's answer with the example to determine if it is the same standard, better or worse than the example. You can then use this to allocate a mark for the answer based on the Lead Examiner's mark on the example.

You may well need to read back through the answer as you apply the mark scheme to clarify points and assure yourself that the level and the mark are appropriate.

Indicative content in the mark scheme is provided as a guide for examiners. It is not intended to be exhaustive and you must credit other valid points. Students do not have to cover all of the points mentioned in the Indicative content to reach the highest level of the mark scheme.

An answer which contains nothing of relevance to the question must be awarded no marks.

### Information for examiners marking **Aspects of tragedy: closed book**

Welcome to this mark scheme which is designed to help you deliver fair and accurate assessment. Please read all sections carefully and ensure that you follow the requirements that they contain.

### The significance of closed book

Examiners must understand that in marking a closed book exam there are examining implications. Students do not have their texts in front of them, so while it is expected that they will use quotations, it is also legitimate to use close textual references. They will have had to memorise quotations so there may be some errors which should not be over penalised. Detailed discussions of particular sections of texts are less likely here than in open book exams. Instead, students may range broadly across their texts as they construct their arguments.

There are specific issues for AO2 – how meanings are shaped in texts. Students will not have their texts in front of them, so although they will be able to make specific references to structural and organisational issues, comments on other methods may be more general.

### Arriving at Marks

1. All questions are framed to address all the Assessment Objectives (AOs). Weightings are given above the generic mark scheme. Answers are marked holistically but, when deciding upon a mark in a band, examiners should bear in mind the relative weightings of the assessment objectives (see page 5) and be careful not to over/under credit a particular skill. This will be exemplified and reinforced as part of examiner training and standardisation. Examiners need to read the whole answer taking into account its strengths and weaknesses and then place it in the appropriate band.
2. Examiners should avoid making early snap judgements before the whole answer has been read. Some students begin tentatively but go on to make relevant points.
3. Examiners should be prepared to use the full mark range and not 'bunch' scripts in the middle for safety. Top marks are attainable if students could not be expected to do more in the time and under the conditions in which they are working.
4. Examiners should mark positively. Although the mark scheme provides some indicators for what students are likely to write about, examiners should be willing to reward what is actually there – **provided of course, that it is relevant to the question being asked.**
5. Examiners should remember that there is not only one right answer. Students' views which are relevant, well-argued and supported by appropriate textual evidence must receive credit whether the examiner agrees with the views or not. It is important to try to remain flexible if a student introduces unusual or unorthodox ideas.
6. Examiners should remember that length and quality are not synonymous. Some brief answers may be relevant and concise. Equally, long answers may be diffuse and repetitive.
7. If answers are short or incomplete, examiners can only reward what is there and assess accordingly. Some further credit can be given to answers finished in note form.

**Using the Mark Bands**

8. When placing answers in mark bands, examiners need to look closely at the descriptors and the detailed generic mark bands on page 7. The key words for the bands are important and are printed below.

MARK BAND DESCRIPTORS	
Band 5 (21–25)	perceptive/assured
Band 4 (16–20)	coherent/thorough
Band 3 (11–15)	straightforward/relevant
Band 2 (6–10)	simple/generalised
Band 1 (1–5)	largely irrelevant, largely misunderstood, largely inaccurate

9. Answers placed at the top of the band will securely address the descriptors; answers at the lower end of the band will securely address the descriptors below and begin to show the qualities of the band into which you are placing them. Careful judgements need to be made about marks in the middle of the range; here it is likely that the key descriptors will be more intermittent but still clearly evident.
10. There will be occasions when an answer addresses descriptors in different bands; in such cases, the ‘best-fit’ model applies. Here examiners will need to exercise a different kind of judgement, looking to see where the answer can be most fairly and appropriately placed in terms of its quality against the descriptors.
11. Examiners must remember that the mark bands are not equivalent to grades: grades are decided by the awarding committee at the end of each session.

**Advice about marking each section****Section A**

12. Examiners need to bear in mind the following key points when marking extract based questions:
- does the student have an overview of the extract?
  - has the student written about dramatic method?
  - has the student seen the significance of the extract in relation to the overall tragedy?
  - has the student quoted from the extract to support ideas?
  - the student’s AO1 competence.

In the case of a significant omission to an answer the examiner should not give a mark higher than Band 4.

### **Section B**

13. Examiners need to bear in mind the following key points when marking questions based on single texts:
- has the student engaged in a relevant debate or constructed a relevant argument?
  - has the student referred to different parts of the play to support their views?
  - has the student referred to the Shakespeare's dramatic method?
  - the student's AO1 competence.

In the case of a significant omission to an answer the examiner should not give a mark higher than Band 4.

### **Section C**

14. Examiners need to bear in mind the following key points when marking questions connecting two texts:
- has the student focused on the aspect of tragedy set up in the question and referred to two texts?
  - has the student engaged in a relevant debate or constructed a relevant argument around the two texts?
  - has the student considered the writers' authorial methods in the two texts?
  - has the student adhered to the rubric – one drama text and one other, with one of the texts being pre-1900?
  - has the student given substantial coverage of two texts?
  - the student's AO1 competence.

In the case of a significant omission to an answer the examiner should not give a mark higher than Band 4.

### **Annotation**

15. Examiners should remember that annotation is directed solely to senior examiners.
16. In addition to giving a mark, examiners should write a brief summative comment indicating how the mark has been arrived at. These comments are likely to mirror the appropriate mark band descriptors but comments must not be mechanical. Examiners need to describe student performance.
17. Please remember that scripts can go back to students, so although your audience is a senior examiner, you must express your views temperately.
18. Use the model marked script for guidance.

### **The assessment objectives and their significance**

19. All questions are framed to test AOs 5, 4, 3 and 2, so if students answer the question, then they will be addressing the AOs. In marking questions, however, examiners must also take account of AO1.

The AOs are as follows:

- AO5** Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations. (12%)
- AO4** Explore connections across literary texts. (12%)
- AO3** Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received. (24%)
- AO2** Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts. (24%)
- AO1** Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression. (28%)

Weightings for each question are as follows:

AO5: 3 marks AO4: 3 marks AO3: 6 marks AO2: 6 marks AO1: 7 marks

### Description of annotations

Annotation	Description
Tick	relevant point, idea, reference or development/support for idea
On Page Comment	to explain a tick/ to describe an aspect of candidate performance
Bracketed tick	point not quite clinched
?	an unclear point
IR	irrelevant point or material
REP	ideas or material repeated
SEEN	blank pages noted

Mark	AO	Typical features	How to arrive at mark
Band 5 <b>Perceptive/Assured</b> 21-25 marks  ‘ <b>Perception</b> ’ is demonstrated when students are showing the depth of their understanding and responding sensitively to the texts and task.  ‘ <b>Assuredness</b> ’ is shown when students write with confidence and conviction.	AO5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>perceptive and confident engagement with the debate set up in the task</li> </ul>	This band is characterised by <b>perceptive</b> and <b>assured</b> work which shows confidence, sharpness of mind and sophistication in relation to the task.  At the top of the band students are consistently <b>assured</b> and will demonstrate sensitivity and <b>perception</b> across all five assessment objectives in the course of their response.  At the bottom of the band there will be coherence and accuracy with some <b>perception</b> but with less consistency and evenness.
	AO4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>perceptive exploration of connections across literary texts arising out of generic study</li> </ul>	
	AO3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>perceptive understanding of the significance of relevant contexts in relation to the task</li> <li>assuredness in the connection between those contexts and the genre studied</li> </ul>	
	AO2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>perceptive understanding of authorial methods in relation to the task</li> <li>assured engagement with how meanings are shaped by the methods used</li> </ul>	
	AO1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>perceptive, assured and sophisticated argument in relation to the task</li> <li>assured use of literary critical concepts and terminology; mature and impressive expression</li> </ul>	
Band 4 <b>Coherent/ Thorough</b> 16-20 marks  ‘ <b>Coherence</b> ’ is shown when students are logical and consistent in their arguments in relation to the task.  They hold their ideas together in an intelligible way.  ‘ <b>Thoroughness</b> ’ is shown when students write carefully, precisely and accurately.	AO5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>thorough engagement with the debate set up in the task</li> </ul>	This band is characterised by <b>coherent</b> and <b>thorough</b> work where ideas are linked together in a focused and purposeful way in relation to the task.  At the top of the band students will demonstrate a fully <b>coherent</b> and <b>thorough</b> argument across all five assessment objectives in the course of their response.  At the bottom of the band ideas will be discussed in a shaped, relevant and purposeful way with a clear sense of direction, with one or two lapses in <b>coherence</b> and accuracy.
	AO4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>logical and consistent exploration of connections across literary texts arising out of generic study</li> </ul>	
	AO3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>thorough understanding of the significance of relevant contexts in relation to the task</li> <li>coherence in the connection between those contexts and the genre studied</li> </ul>	
	AO2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>thorough understanding of authorial methods in relation to the task</li> <li>thorough engagement with how meanings are shaped by the methods used</li> </ul>	
	AO1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>logical, thorough and coherent argument in relation to the task where ideas are debated in depth</li> <li>appropriate use of literary critical concepts and terminology; precise and accurate expression</li> </ul>	

<p>Band 3 <b>Straightforward/ Relevant</b> 11-15 marks</p> <p>‘<b>Straightforward</b>’ work is shown when students make their ideas in relation to the task clearly known.</p> <p>‘<b>Relevant</b>’ work is shown when students are focused on the task and use detail in an appropriate and supportive way.</p>	AO5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>straightforward engagement with the debate set up in the task</li> </ul>	<p>This band is characterised by <b>straightforward</b> and <b>relevant</b> work where the student’s response to the task is clear and intelligible.</p> <p>At the top of the band students will demonstrate consistent <b>straightforward</b> understanding in the course of their argument. Ideas will be developed <b>relevantly</b>.</p> <p>At the bottom of the band there will be flashes of <b>relevant</b> understanding with evidence of <b>straightforward</b> thinking.</p>
	AO4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>explores connections across literary texts arising out of generic study in a straightforward way</li> </ul>	
	AO3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>straightforward understanding of the significance of relevant contexts in relation to the task</li> <li>relevant connections between those contexts and the genre studied</li> </ul>	
	AO2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>straightforward understanding of authorial methods in relation to the task</li> <li>relevant engagement with how meanings are shaped by the methods used</li> </ul>	
	AO1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>sensibly ordered ideas in a relevant argument in relation to the task</li> <li>some use of literary critical concepts and terminology which are mainly appropriate; straightforward and clear expression</li> </ul>	
<p>Band 2 <b>Simple/Generalised</b> 6-10 marks</p> <p>‘<b>Simple</b>’ work is shown when students write in an unelaborated and basic way in relation to the task.</p> <p>‘<b>Generalised</b>’ work is shown when students write without regard to particular details.</p>	AO5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>simple and generalised response to the debate set up in the task</li> </ul>	<p>This band is characterised by <b>simple</b> and <b>generalised</b> work which is mainly linked to the task.</p> <p>At the top of the band students will demonstrate a basic <b>generalised</b> understanding in the course of their answer. Ideas will be developed in a <b>simple</b> way.</p> <p>At the bottom of the band there will be inconsistency, but the beginnings of a <b>simple</b> and <b>generalised</b> understanding.</p>
	AO4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>simple exploration of connections across literary texts arising out of generic study</li> </ul>	
	AO3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>simple understanding of the significance of relevant contexts in relation to the task</li> <li>generalised connections between those contexts and the genre studied</li> </ul>	
	AO2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>simple understanding of authorial methods in relation to the task</li> <li>generalised engagement with how meanings are shaped by the methods used</li> </ul>	
	AO1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a simple structure to the argument which may not be consistent but which does relate to the task</li> <li>generalised use of literary critical concepts and terminology; simple expression</li> </ul>	

<p>Band 1 <b>Largely irrelevant/largely misunderstood/largely inaccurate</b> <b>1-5 marks</b></p> <p><b>‘Largely irrelevant’</b> work is shown when students write in an unclear way with only occasional reference to what is required by the question.</p> <p><b>‘Largely misunderstood’</b> and <b>‘largely inaccurate’</b> work is shown when knowledge of the text is insecure, hazy and often wrong.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• some vague points in relation to the task and some ideas about task and text(s)</li> <li>• the writing is likely to be unclear and incorrect; if it is accurate the content will be irrelevant</li> <li>• little sense of the AOs in relation to the task; little sense of how meanings are shaped; little sense of any relevant contexts; little sense of any connection arising out of generic study; little sense of an argument in relation to the task</li> </ul>	<p>This band is characterised by work which is <b>largely irrelevant</b> and <b>largely misunderstood</b> and <b>largely inaccurate</b>, and so unlikely to be addressing the AOs in a relevant way.</p> <p>At the top of the band students will mention some unconnected points in relation to the task during the course of their writing. The writing is likely to lack clarity.</p> <p>At the bottom of the band there will be no connection with the task; the writing will be hard to follow and <b>irrelevant</b>.</p>
<p><b>0 marks</b></p>		<p>No marks for response when nothing is written or where response has no connection to the text(s) or task.</p>	

**Question 01**

0 1

***Othello* – William Shakespeare**

Read the extract below and then answer the question.

Explore the significance of this extract in relation to the tragedy of the play as a whole.

Remember to include in your answer relevant analysis of Shakespeare’s dramatic methods.

**[25 marks]**

**Some possible content** is given below. It suggests some of the ways the Assessment Objectives might be addressed, but as ‘significance’ relates to contextual, structural, linguistic and interpretative issues, some ideas will inevitably address more than one AO. In their answer students should refer to the significance that can be seen in the extract and how some of this significance may pertain to the tragedy of the play as a whole.

Examiners must also remember that because students have read and studied *Othello* through the lens of **tragedy**, the AOs must necessarily be connected to that genre through the task.

The students are given an extract so when working on that they should quote directly to support their ideas. This is a **closed book** exam, so while it is expected that students will use quotations when writing about other parts of the play it is also legitimate to make more general reference.

Please refer to pages 4 – 7.

**AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations**

With respect to the interpretative significances that can be found, there will be a variety of interpretations here in relation to readers and audiences. Some students might comment on the choices made by directors.

Some possible ideas:

- Shakespeare’s use of the soliloquy to develop the complexity and mystery of Iago’s character and villainy here and elsewhere
- contempt felt for Iago’s cruel plotting against Othello, Cassio and Desdemona here and elsewhere
- sympathy felt for the hapless and gullible Roderigo who believes Iago’s lies here and elsewhere
- fascination and bemusement at the depth of Iago’s hatred and evil
- the terror inspired by Iago’s calculating mind, his skipping from point to point and his easy sliding over the unconvincing reasons for his grievances
- puzzlement at his motivation, the motive hunting and the motiveless malignancy
- the feeling that the audience is caught up in Iago’s evil, their becoming his accomplices
- ‘reading’ and analysing Iago from a psychoanalytical perspective
- Iago’s role as a malcontent
- Iago’s warped ideas about love, eg his trading with Roderigo for Desdemona, his collocating love and lust, his desire to be revenged on Othello and Cassio because he thinks they may have slept with his wife
- the expectation that further horrors will unfold, the promise and expectation set up by the rhyming couplet that ends the soliloquy
- etc

#### **AO4 Explore connections across literary texts**

With respect to significance of connections with the tragic genre students might focus on:

- villainy as seen in Iago's Machiavellian planning
- the tragic aspect of power seen here in Iago's control and manipulation of Roderigo
- victimisation as seen in the treatment of Roderigo and in Iago's plotting against Othello, Cassio and Desdemona
- the tragic aspect of revenge as seen in Iago's wanting to get even with Othello 'wife for wife' or putting Othello into a 'jealousy so strong that judgement cannot cure'
- etc

#### **AO3 Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received**

With respect to significance of contexts students might focus on:

- the setting of a public street in Cyprus near the harbour where Othello, Cassio and Desdemona have just arrived
- the psychological context seen here in Iago's internal musings, his motive hunting, his psychopathic planning
- the context of the affections seen here in the discussions about love and Iago's revelations of his lust for Desdemona and his hatred for Othello, perhaps also his desire for Othello's love
- the gender context seen here in the disparaging way Iago speaks of Desdemona and Emilia
- etc

#### **AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts**

With respect to significance of dramatic method students might focus on:

- the concluding part of the dialogue (and plan) between Iago and Roderigo after Iago has persuaded Roderigo that Desdemona is in love with Cassio and before Othello's proclamation that there will be celebrations to mark the end of the war
- the contrast of the exchanges between Iago and Roderigo which are in prose and the elevated verse for Iago's soliloquy
- the exit of Roderigo leaving Iago alone on stage to reveal his thought process and emergent plans to the audience
- the exit of Iago after the rhyming couplet
- the use of imperatives in Iago's speeches to Roderigo, his use of simple language and careful step by step instructions to humour and manipulate Roderigo
- the simple and brief replies of Roderigo in contrast to the length of speeches from Iago reflecting the power imbalance
- the balanced and measured lines in Iago's soliloquy revealing his calculating mind
- the structural development of the verse with the focus on Othello at the start and end (Othello is first described as having 'a constant, loving noble nature' and Iago's intention is to have Othello thank him, love him and reward him), the reduction of the noble nature of Othello to 'an ass', one who will be practised upon 'Even to madness'
- Iago's use of contemptuous language for all characters who will be woven into his plan – 'the Moor', 'this poor trash of Venice', 'our Michael Cassio', 'my night-cap'
- the emotive and sexual language and imagery – 'absolute lust', 'leaped into my seat', 'diet my revenge', 'poisonous mineral', 'gnaw my inwards' - revealing Iago's perversion and depravity
- the use of diabolical language – 'Knavery's plain face is never seen till used'
- the use of irony: Iago's claim that Othello will prove to Desdemona a 'most dear husband'

- etc

Given that this is a **closed book** exam, references to other parts of the play may be more generalised than those from the passage.

**AO1 Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression**

With respect to competence in writing focus needs to be on the:

- quality of argument
- organisation of ideas
- use of appropriate concepts and terminology
- technical accuracy

**Accept any valid discussion of interpretations, any valid discussion of contexts and any valid discussion of dramatic method.**

**Question 02****0 2*****King Lear* – William Shakespeare**

Read the extract below and then answer the question.

Explore the significance of this extract in relation to the tragedy of the play as a whole.

Remember to include in your answer relevant analysis of Shakespeare's dramatic methods.

**[25 marks]**

**Some possible content** is given below. It suggests some of the ways the Assessment Objectives might be addressed, but as 'significance' relates to contextual, structural, linguistic and interpretative issues, some ideas will inevitably address more than one AO. In their answer students should refer to the significance that can be seen in the extract and how some of this significance may pertain to the tragedy of the play as a whole.

Examiners must also remember that because students have read and studied *King Lear* through the lens of **tragedy**, the AOs must necessarily be connected to that genre through the task.

The students are given an extract so when working on that they should quote directly to support their ideas. This is a **closed book** exam, so while it is expected that students will use quotations when writing about other parts of the play it is also legitimate to make more general reference.

Please refer to pages 4 – 7.

**AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations**

With respect to the interpretative significances that can be found, there will be a variety of interpretations here in relation to readers and audiences. Some students might comment on the choices made by directors.

Some possible ideas:

- the beauty of the reconciliation between Lear and Cordelia and its hope of bringing restoration and recovery, possible links with the tender words when they are later in prison, the later crushing of hope and recovery, the earlier aggression Lear showed towards his favourite daughter
- the religious significance of this reunion, the reason for Cordelia's returning from France ('O dear father/ It is thy business that I go about')
- Cordelia as a Christ-like figure, willing to forgive, wanting to heal her father's pain, refusing to accuse - all which link with her death and suggestion of sacrifice
- the contrast of the behaviours of the three sisters, Lear's reference to their wrongs
- the theatre and stage audience's relief that Lear's great rage is over and that father and daughter are reunited
- the sympathy that might be felt for all the characters here but in different ways
- the insight the scene gives into old age and dementia, possible links with Lear's madness earlier on the heath
- the importance of family relationships and family bonds
- the significance of the 'wheel of fire' metaphor to tragedy – and this tragedy in particular
- the interconnection of life, death, sleep and madness and the fragile lines between them
- the irony of Lear's being addressed as 'majesty' and 'highness' and as having a kingdom, given what he has given away and given what happens after this scene

- the irony that this scene will be undercut by the final atrocities of the villainy of Edmund and his sentence on the lives of Cordelia and Lear
- Kent as a tragic figure in his own right who, although known by Cordelia, still wishes for his identity to be kept from Lear, whose purpose in being disguised is to bring about this reconciliation and who watches on events here in awed silence
- etc

#### **AO4 Explore connections across literary texts**

With respect to significance of connections with the tragic genre students might focus on:

- the trajectory of the tragic hero's journey seen here in Lear's learning and realisation of his errors, his asking for forgiveness, the beginnings of his acknowledgement of the worth of Cordelia and Kent
- the tragic aspect of moral growth and learning seen in Lear's behaviour and in Cordelia's change from Act 1
- the aspect of suffering seen in Lear's shame and loss of confidence and in Cordelia's weeping
- the aspect of the forces of good which bring a return to order in tragedy, seen here in the uniting of Lear, Cordelia, Kent, the Doctor and the Gentleman
- etc

#### **AO3 Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received**

With respect to significance of contexts students might focus on:

- the context of social class shown here in the respect for Cordelia and Lear from the Doctor, Kent and the Gentleman
- the context of madness shown in the tentativeness of Lear's recovering sanity, the Doctor's fear that it is a danger to unsettle Lear, Lear's own belief that he is not in his perfect mind, Lear's uncertainty about what he remembers
- the context of family relationships shown here in the natural and loving bond between father and daughter, a relationship where there are no recriminations and no blame in contrast to the sisters who have done Lear wrong
- the religious context seen here when Cordelia asks for her father's benediction
- etc

#### **AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts**

With respect to significance of dramatic method students might focus on:

- the waking of Lear in the presence of Cordelia, the Doctor, Kent and the Gentleman, their reconciliation after the playing of music and before Kent and the Gentleman talk about the approaching war
- the build-up to Lear's recognition of Cordelia, the anticipation felt, the growing tension, the stunned and gentle reactions of the stage audience, the climactic end to his speech where he says 'I think this lady /To be my child Cordelia'
- the contrast in Lear's behaviour and manner here from when he was last seen running across the heath with flowers in his hair and from when he was last with Cordelia in Act 1
- the use of stage directions, Lear's kneeling to Cordelia, her weeping to show the depth of feeling and the love between them, his pricking his skin to be assured of his condition
- the stage direction at the end when Lear and Cordelia exit showing their connection and the leaving of the stage to Kent and the Gentleman to discuss the arbitrament which is 'like to be

bloody’

- the structural links between this scene and Act 1 especially Cordelia’s request for Lear’s benediction which he withheld from her when he banished her
- the gentle tone and simple measured language of Lear’s tentative recognition of Cordelia
- the terms of address used to show respect and love, eg the Doctor’s calling Cordelia ‘madam’, Lear’s calling her a ‘lady’ and ‘my child’, Cordelia’s calling Lear ‘sir’, ‘your highness’, Lear’s calling himself ‘a very foolish fond old man’
- the use of simple questions by Cordelia to show her tenderness and strength of feeling, eg ‘How does my royal lord? How fares your majesty?’
- the use of violent imagery by Lear to heighten the tragedy of his position, ‘wheel of fire’, tears’ scalding ‘like molten lead’
- the use of religious imagery and language, eg ‘soul in bliss’ ‘hold your hand in benediction o’er me’
- the use of ‘thou’ and ‘you’ to show Lear’s closeness with Cordelia and his respect in contrast to his using the same terms for contempt and distance in Act 1
- the use of verse to elevate the moment of reconciliation, the mixture of verse and prose from Cordelia, Lear and the Doctor for different purposes and to show the highly charged emotional impact
- the use of shared lines between Lear and Cordelia to show the strength of their bond
- the use of simple repetitions for dramatic intensity, eg ‘old and foolish’, ‘I am, I am’, ‘No cause, no cause’
- etc

Given that this is a **closed book** exam, references to other parts of the play may be more generalised than those from the passage.

**AO1 Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression**

With respect to competence in writing focus needs to be on the:

- quality of argument
- organisation of ideas
- use of appropriate concepts and terminology
- technical accuracy

**Accept any valid discussion of interpretations, any valid discussion of contexts and any valid discussion of dramatic method.**

## Section B

## Question 03

0 3

***Othello* – William Shakespeare**

‘Venice and Cyprus are polar opposites: Venice represents civilisation and control, Cyprus represents catastrophe and chaos.’

To what extent do you agree with this view?

Remember to include in your answer relevant comment on Shakespeare’s dramatic methods.

[25 marks]

**Some possible content** is given below. It suggests some of the ways the Assessment Objectives might be addressed, but as ‘significance’ relates to contextual, structural, linguistic and interpretative issues, some ideas will inevitably address more than one AO.

Examiners must also remember that because students have read and studied *Othello* through the lens of **tragedy**, the AOs must necessarily be connected to that genre through the task.

This is a **closed book** exam, so while it is expected that students will use quotations when writing about the play it is also legitimate to make more general reference.

Please refer to pages 4 – 7.

**AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations**

With respect to meanings and interpretations, students may choose to look at all sides of the debate or just one. It is the quality of the student’s response that matters.

Some students might consider:

- Venice as representing civilisation and control in *Othello*, with the Duke using logic to resolve problems, eg the issue of the elopement of Othello and Desdemona and the Duke’s management of this
- Othello’s control and command; he handles disagreements civilly
- Venice as a city of culture, a major Mediterranean seaport and centre of commerce, the home of the art world that flourished during the Italian Renaissance
- Venice as a place in which one can depend on the authorities to defend the rights of individuals against discrimination
- Venice as the place where Othello and Desdemona’s love is born and where it flourishes; Cyprus being the place where it perishes
- Cyprus symbolising barbaric actions and chaos, the place where Iago reigns, using manipulation and deceit to destroy relationships
- Cyprus as an isolated military outpost, a place of danger; war torn, claustrophobic, a place where physical fights break out between Montano and Cassio and Roderigo and Cassio
- Cyprus as the place where Othello’s hot temper and jealousy destroys what is loving and good
- Cyprus as a bastion of male power
- the juxtaposition of the two settings to demonstrate what happens to Othello when he allows his emotions to rule him rather than his logic
- how at the end of the play, though still in Cyprus, the Venetian visitors Lodovico and Gratiano bring

a return to order

- how at the end of the play, though in Cyprus, it is as if the play ideologically concludes in Venice

Some students might consider:

- that Venice and Cyprus are not polar opposites and that it is far too simplistic to say they are
- though seemingly sophisticated and cultivated, Venetians harbour many depravities
- that Iago's plot is formulated in Venice
- hatred and racial prejudice which exist in Venice as seen in Iago, Brabantio and Roderigo
- Venice as a place where according to Iago – and Emilia - infidelity flourishes
- Venice's being associated with political intrigue, decadence
- Cyprus, though an outpost, still being governed by Venetian values
- what happens in Cyprus as not being caused by war but by peace

#### **AO4 Explore connections across literary texts**

With respect to connections with the wider tragic genre students might focus on:

- the tragic pattern of the movement from prosperity to misery as seen in Othello's joy in Venice being replaced by his wretchedness in Cyprus
- the aspect of chaos as shown by the street brawl and the murders which take place in Cyprus
- tragic villainy as seen in Iago's ascendancy in Cyprus and in his ability to cause civil disorder
- the aspect of the death of the tragic hero and tragic victims: Othello, Desdemona, Emilia and Roderigo all die or are murdered in Cyprus
- etc

#### **AO3 Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received**

With respect to contextual issues arising from the question and the play students might focus on:

- the contextual settings of Venice and Cyprus for key stages in the tragic pattern
- the context of power as seen in the control of the Duke in Venice and his decision to send his General to lead the army to fight the Turks
- the context of war as seen in the Venetian fleet's being sent to Cyprus to fight the heathen Turk
- the social context as seen in the behaviour of the Venetians in Venice and the expectations of similar behaviour in Cyprus, eg Lodovico is shocked by the violence shown by Othello towards Desdemona in Cyprus
- the gender context as seen in attitudes towards women in Venice, eg Brabantio believes his daughter should be obedient, Roderigo believes that Desdemona can be plied with jewels

#### **AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts**

With respect to dramatic method students might focus on:

- structural issues relating to Venice and Cyprus, the setting of Act 1 in Venice and the transition to Cyprus for Act 2, the projected and ideological return to Venice at the end of the play
- the different settings chosen by Shakespeare for the transition from order and calm to chaos
- the dramatic actions that take place in Venice and Cyprus, the thwarted fight in Act 1 and the brawl in Act 2, the measured government discussions in Venice, the stabbings, strangulation in Cyprus
- the contrast of Othello's speeches and soliloquies in Venice and Cyprus
- the contrast of the amount of public speech given to Iago in Venice compared with that given to him in Cyprus

- Othello's measured and romantic language in Venice in contrast to the bestial and diabolical language he uses in Cyprus
- Iago's coarse and racist language in both Venice and Cyprus
- etc

Given that this is a **closed book** exam, comments on the ways meanings are shaped may be generalised.

**AO1 Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression**

With respect to competence in writing focus needs to be on the:

- quality of argument
- organisation of ideas
- use of appropriate concepts and terminology
- technical accuracy

**Accept any valid interpretations, any valid comments on and any relevant integrated comment on dramatic methods that are embedded into the argument.**

**Question 04****0 4*****Othello* – William Shakespeare**

‘Ultimately it is hard to see Emilia as anything other than a tragic victim of male power and malice.’

To what extent do you agree with this view?

Remember to include in your answer relevant comment on Shakespeare’s dramatic methods.

**[25 marks]**

**Some possible content** is given below. It suggests some of the ways the Assessment Objectives might be addressed, but as ‘significance’ relates to contextual, structural, linguistic and interpretative issues, some ideas will inevitably address more than one AO.

Examiners must also remember that because students have read and studied *Othello* through the lens of **tragedy**, the AOs must necessarily be connected to that genre through the task.

This is a **closed book** exam, so while it is expected that students will use quotations when writing about the play it is also legitimate to make more general reference.

Please refer to pages 4 – 7.

**AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations**

With respect to meanings and interpretations, students may choose to look at all sides of the debate or just one. It is the quality of the student’s response that matters.

Some students might consider:

- Emilia’s malicious death at the hands of her husband when she is stabbed from behind
- the lack of ceremony afforded her at her death by men who take no notice of her end but focus on Othello (her death is unremarked)
- her being a victim of patriarchy as seen in her attitudes, her believing that she should be dutiful to her husband (“Tis proper I obey him’)
- her being a victim of malicious domestic abuse by Iago who is controlling and who inflicts mental cruelty on her
- Iago’s use of sex to exhort Emilia to steal the handkerchief (he has *woo’d* her to steal it)
- Iago’s treating Emilia as a whore (‘you have a thing for me’); her saying that when men have had sex with women they ‘belch’ them
- Emilia’s judging Bianca as she herself has been judged and taught to judge
- her being humiliated by the malice of Iago who ridicules and slanders her in public and systematically refers to her as worthless
- her passivity in the face of his abuse; she only says ‘you have little cause to say so’
- Iago’s claims that Emilia has been unfaithful
- the abuse she is given by Othello
- her stealing of Desdemona’s handkerchief because she wants nothing but to please the fantasy of her husband
- her keeping silent about the handkerchief; her silence when abused by Iago in the early stages of the play, her loyalty to her husband (she only expresses cynicism to Desdemona, not her husband)
- her keeping silent even though she claims she suspected her husband (‘I thought so then’)

- etc

Some students might consider:

- the complexity of Emilia's role making her more than 'a victim'
- Emilia's courage in the final scene when she denounces Iago and Othello which redeems her
- the irony that the downfall and the undoing of Iago comes from his wife who he clearly miscalculated
- her being a champion of feminist values
- the victim turned victrix in the final scene
- her being an agent in the tragedy of Desdemona in stealing the handkerchief
- her disparaging attitude towards Bianca which is itself cruel
- the friendship, comfort and support she gives to Desdemona during their encounters
- her selflessness in the final scene when she speaks out on behalf of Desdemona
- her sacrificing her life for the honour of her mistress
- at the end, her dead body being on stage and central (she is part of the 'tragic loading of the bed'), reminding the audience of her deliverance and her power, her ultimate triumph over Iago
- etc

'Ultimately' might be handled in a number of ways in relation to where the student stands and assesses. Students might take it to mean – from a position at the end of the play or from any number of different points within the text or after weighing up a number of interpretations.

#### **AO4 Explore connections across literary texts**

With respect to connections with the wider tragic genre students might focus on:

- the tragic aspect of malice as shown in Iago's cruel treatment of his wife, one pawn in his diabolical game
- the aspect of victimisation as seen in the way Emilia is treated and regarded by men, particularly Othello and Iago
- the aspect of power as shown in the way Othello commands her and how he demands subservience from her, Iago's power as husband and his killing her
- the tragic aspect of courage in the face of adversity as shown in Emilia's defiance at the end of the play
- etc

#### **AO3 Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received**

With respect to contextual issues arising from the question and the play students might focus on:

- the gender context which informs the expectations of how women behave within the world of the play
- the social context whereby Emilia is in the service of Desdemona
- the marriage context in which Iago and Emilia operate
- the moral context which informs judgements of the behaviours of men and women who interact with Emilia
- etc

**AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts**

With respect to dramatic method students might focus on:

- structural issues relating to where Emilia appears in the play, the contrasts between her subservient behaviour in Act 2 and her confidence and defiance at the end of the play, her entrance after Othello has strangled Desdemona
- the different settings chosen by Shakespeare to reveal the way that men impose their power on Emilia, the street near the harbour for Iago's coarse jokes against women, Desdemona's chamber, etc
- the dramatic actions involving Emilia, her finding Desdemona's handkerchief, her attempt to woo Iago with it, her tenderness towards Desdemona, Iago's stabbing of her, her being placed on the bed
- the contrast of Emilia's language and that of Desdemona, the contrast between Emilia and Iago's speech to each other
- the echoes of Iago's speech in Emilia's language
- the use by Emilia of repetition, imperatives, questions, emotive language in the final scene
- her singing the willow song as she dies, echoing and therefore linking her fate with Desdemona's
- etc

Given that this is a **closed book** exam, comments on the ways meanings are shaped may be generalised.

**AO1 Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression**

With respect to competence in writing focus needs to be on the:

- quality of argument
- organisation of ideas
- use of appropriate concepts and terminology
- technical accuracy

**Accept any valid interpretations, any valid comments on and any relevant integrated comment on dramatic methods that are embedded into the argument.**

**Question 05****0 5*****King Lear* – William Shakespeare**

‘It is right and just that the wilful old men in *King Lear* are taught a lesson’.

To what extent do you agree with this view?

Remember to include in your answer relevant comment on Shakespeare’s dramatic methods.

**[25 marks]**

**Some possible content** is given below. It suggests some of the ways the Assessment Objectives might be addressed, but as ‘significance’ relates to contextual, structural, linguistic and interpretative issues, some ideas will inevitably address more than one AO.

Examiners must also remember that because students have read and studied *King Lear* through the lens of **tragedy**, the AOs must necessarily be connected to that genre through the task.

This is a **closed book** exam, so while it is expected that students will use quotations when writing about the play it is also legitimate to make more general reference.

Please refer to pages 4 – 7.

**AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations**

With respect to meanings and interpretations, students may choose to look at all sides of the debate or just one. It is the quality of the student’s response that matters.

Some students might consider:

- that in the world of the play, where an Old Testament ideology prevails, punishment is a requirement for the two old men who behave badly and who need to acknowledge and learn from what they have done
- that the tragic genre itself requires wrong doing to be punished, for those with excessive pride to be taught a lesson
- Lear’s wilful decision to divide his kingdom, his wilfulness seen in: his bad judgements, his rash temper, his banishing of Cordelia and Kent, his believing he can live with his daughters in turn for a month at a time with his one hundred knights – behaviours which need to be punished
- his irrational and cruel curse on Gonerill, his verbal attack on Regan, his wilful refusal to disquantity his train, his pride which takes him out into the storm – behaviours which militate against audience sympathy and which require a just punishment
- Gloucester’s wilfulness seen in his anger and proclamation against Edgar for which he needs to learn a lesson
- his casual attitude towards his adultery and his joy at the sport of having had sex with Edmund’s mother when his own wife was nursing their three month old child, Edgar, for which he must be punished
- his foolish naivety in believing Edmund’s lies and his failure to speak to Edgar to check the veracity of Edmund’s claims which he has to learn from
- Gloucester’s being a traitor to the kingdom and the prevailing powers of Cornwall, Regan and Gonerill and Albany when he seeks Lear on the heath which is a punishable crime by law
- the punishers of the old men being their children who see themselves as having been mistreated by their fathers so are justified in their actions
- Regan’s words to Gloucester when she shuts the doors against Lear - also foretelling Gloucester’s

later punishment ('O sir, to wilful men/ The injuries that they themselves procure/ Must be their schoolmasters') which inform the question

- the positive outcomes for Lear and Gloucester who both learn from their mistakes, making the teaching 'just' (in a way not intended by Regan)
- etc

Some students might consider:

- that in the world of the play, where a New Testament ideology prevails, punishment is ultimately rejected and the focus is on understanding and forgiveness
- the unjustifiable way the wicked children regard 'old men'
- Lear's punishments and suffering exceeding his crimes
- Lear's being an old man with dementia and the inappropriateness of chastisement
- the need for charity, care, tolerance and forgiveness in dealing with old men as exemplified by Cordelia and Edgar
- Gloucester's blinding being cruel beyond measure and not a justifiable punishment for his wilfulness
- his 'punishment' by Edmund for fathering him out of wedlock being unfair given Gloucester's love for him
- his 'punishment' not being a punishment at all but just a means for Edmund to steal his brother's inheritance
- Gloucester's punishment by Edmund (his being duped and manipulated) as being unjust since he is punished for the prevailing attitudes and laws of custom and not for personal reasons
- Gloucester's wilfulness, when he goes out on to the heath to aid Lear (which Regan and Cornwall see as treason), as being a positive stand against evil – something to be admired
- etc

Some might argue that Lear and Gloucester need to be taught a lesson but that the punishments they receive are not 'just' because they are excessive.

#### **AO4 Explore connections across literary texts**

With respect to connections with the wider tragic genre students might focus on:

- the tragic aspect of injustice seen in the excessive punishments inflicted on Lear and Gloucester
- the aspect of justice seen in the need for some retribution for the wilful behaviour of Lear and Gloucester
- the aspect of learning that Lear and Gloucester experience as they confront their wrongs through their punishments
- etc

#### **AO3 Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received**

With respect to contextual issues arising from the question and the play students might focus on:

- the moral context in relation to the punishments meted out on Lear and Gloucester and the learning they experience
- the context of power as seen in the behaviours of the king and duke and then in the behaviours of the new orders
- the social context of family as seen in the way that families are in discord behaving wilfully and inflicting punishments on each other
- the gender context given that Gonerill and Regan are key perpetrators of punishment

- the religious context and the prevailing expectation that children honour their parents, Old Testament ideas about an eye for an eye and New Testament ideas about forgiveness
- etc

## **AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts**

With respect to dramatic method students might focus on:

- structural issues relating to where the 'old men' behave in a wilful manner and where they are taught a lesson
- the different settings chosen by Shakespeare as a backdrop for the behaviours of the wilful men and places where their punishments take place, for example Lear's palace, Gloucester's castle, the heath, Dover
- the dramatic actions involving the old men, Lear's dividing his kingdom, his behaviour at Gonerill's palace, his anger at Gloucester's castle, his ravings on the heath, Gloucester's misdemeanours in his own castle and his punishment
- the contrast of Lear and Gloucester's speeches when they are in power and when they are receiving punishment
- the unkind and/or vicious language of those administering the punishments, Gonerill and Regan's belittling language to Lear, Regan and Cornwall's brutal language as they take out Gloucester's eyes, Edmund's callous and scheming language as he sets up the punishment for his father and for Lear
- the use of imagery and emotive language to reveal the wilfulness of the old men and their punishments
- etc

Given that this is a **closed book** exam, comments on the ways meanings are shaped may be generalised.

## **AO1 Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression**

With respect to competence in writing focus needs to be on the:

- quality of argument
- organisation of ideas
- use of appropriate concepts and terminology
- technical accuracy

**Accept any valid interpretations, any valid comments on and any relevant integrated comment on dramatic methods that are embedded into the argument.**

**Question 06****0 6*****King Lear* – William Shakespeare**

‘Albany is a highly moral force for good who offers hope for the salvation of the kingdom.’

To what extent do you agree with this view?

Remember to include in your answer relevant comment on Shakespeare’s dramatic methods.

**[25 marks]**

**Some possible content** is given below. It suggests some of the ways the Assessment Objectives might be addressed, but as ‘significance’ relates to contextual, structural, linguistic and interpretative issues, some ideas will inevitably address more than one AO.

Examiners must also remember that because students have read and studied *King Lear* through the lens of **tragedy**, the AOs must necessarily be connected to that genre through the task.

This is a **closed book** exam, so while it is expected that students will use quotations when writing about the play it is also legitimate to make more general reference.

Please refer to pages 4 – 7.

**AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations**

With respect to meanings and interpretations, students may choose to look at all sides of the debate or just one. It is the quality of the student’s response that matters.

Some students might consider:

- Albany as an agent of justice who becomes more prominent as the play progresses
- Albany in the first scene having grounds for not supporting Lear given that in setting up the love test and dividing the kingdom Lear cheats Albany of his rights according to the laws of primogeniture
- Albany’s love for Gonerill, which though it anaesthetises him, is testament to his feelings and capacity to love (he speaks of the ‘great love’ he bears her)
- his being absent when the cruelty of his wife’s actions against Lear take place removing him from blame
- his taking control of situations in the second half of the play and his strength in leading his army
- his sequenced standing up to Edmund (‘I hold you but a subject of this war/ Not as a brother’), Regan (‘That were the most if he should husband you’) and Gonerill (‘The let-alone lies not in your good will’) in the final scene of the play
- his delivery of verdicts and epitaphs on Gonerill and Regan
- his wanting to save the lives of Lear and Cordelia
- his denouncement of Edmund and his preparedness to challenge him in armed combat if no other man answers the trumpet call (‘There is my pledge’)
- his overseeing the duel between Edgar and Edmund in which good overcomes evil
- his praise and admiration of Edgar
- his being one of the few who is alive at the end of the play
- his name of Albany suggesting that he represents the kingdom of Albion
- his belief in nature’s pattern
- his learning from the behaviour of others

- his being the rightful leader in terms of seniority
- etc

Some students might consider:

- Albany's being inadequate
- his being more forceful in the Quarto version where he is given the final lines of the play
- Albany as a ditherer and passive (Gonerill is contemptuous of him)
- his being hesitant, unsure, easily distracted (even in Act 5 after he learns the death sentence is on the lives of Lear and Cordelia, he does not act immediately)
- that his inadequacy does not make him his country's saviour
- that at the end though he has power and authority, what he does with that authority shows he has learned little (first in attempting to restore all authority to Lear and later to share rule with Kent and Edgar, thereby again dividing the kingdom)
- his not having much understanding of the monstrosities Lear has released by dividing the kingdom
- his speaking nonsense and uttering platitudes - all friends shall taste the wages of their virtue, and all foes the cup of their deserving
- etc

There might be legitimate discussion of the word 'highly'. Some students might argue that Albany is a moral force but one that is tepid.

#### **AO4 Explore connections across literary texts**

With respect to connections with the wider tragic genre students might focus on:

- the tragic aspect of forces of good seen in the developing power of Albany
- the aspect of learning seen in the change in Albany as he gradually grasps the ruthlessness of his wife, Regan, Cornwall and Edmund
- the aspect of salvation which becomes more prevalent in the latter stages of the play, an aspect which pertains to Albany
- the aspect of hope which is seen in the fairness of Albany's assessments at the end of the play, Albany as a representative of justice
- etc

#### **AO3 Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received**

With respect to contextual issues arising from the question and the play students might focus on:

- the political context as seen in the way Albany's power grows and in how he tries to disseminate power at the end of the play
- the moral context as Albany judges the behaviour of other and in how audiences judge him
- the mythical/ other world context of Albany as a leader of Albion
- the social context of family as seen in Albany's relationship and treatment of his wife and father in law
- the context of war as shown in Albany's leading his country against the French army and defeating them
- etc

**AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts**

With respect to dramatic method students might focus on:

- structural issues relating to where Albany appears in the play, how he is low key in the first three Acts and then undergoes a moral change in Act 4 scene 2, his taking charge in Act 5
- the different settings chosen by Shakespeare to reveal Albany, his quietness and passiveness at Lear's palace in Act 1, his appearance in his own home after Gonerill's outburst against her father, his stature and presence on the battle field, etc
- the dramatic actions involving Albany, his entrances, his instructions to the Herald to ask for the purposes of the disguised Edgar in his challenge to Edmund, his command to his servants to run to the castle to save Lear and Cordelia
- the contrast of Albany's hesitant and ineffectual language at the start of the play and his piercing and decisive language in Act 4
- the use of irony when Albany says 'The gods defend her' followed by Lear's entrance carrying the dead Cordelia
- the use of bestial language as Albany assesses his wife and her sister; the use of commands as he gives instructions in Act 5 to Edmund; the warm respectful language he uses with Edgar
- etc

Given that this is a **closed book** exam, comments on the ways meanings are shaped may be generalised.

**AO1 Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression**

With respect to competence in writing focus needs to be on the:

- quality of argument
- organisation of ideas
- use of appropriate concepts and terminology
- technical accuracy

**Accept any valid interpretations, any valid comments on and any relevant integrated comment on dramatic methods that are embedded into the argument.**

## Section C

## Question 07

0 7

'Villains and antagonists in tragedies are wickedly attractive.'

To what extent do you agree with this view in relation to **two** texts you have studied?

Remember to include in your answer relevant comment on the ways the writers have shaped meanings.

[25 marks]

**Some possible content** is given below. It suggests some of the ways the Assessment Objectives might be addressed, but as 'significance' relates to contextual, structural, linguistic and interpretative issues, some ideas will inevitably address more than one AO.

Examiners must also remember that because students have read and studied the two texts through the lens of **tragedy**, the AOs must necessarily be connected to that genre through the task.

This is a **closed book** exam, so while it is expected that students will use quotations when writing about the plays it is also legitimate to make more general reference.

Please refer to pages 4 – 7.

**AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations**

Some students might consider a reader's potential:

- fascination with 'the woman' in Willy's backstory – a siren figure, interest in Howard who, through his engagement with technology, might represent an enticing future, delight in Ben Loman (who appears in Willy's imaginings and is somewhat ghostly) who is dynamic in his preparedness to cheat to succeed and who is a foil to Willy's failings
- admiration for Bolingbroke who is defiant in his challenges to Richard, braving the consequences of returning from exile and rebelling in his questioning of Richard's infallibility as divine ruler
- fascination with the toxic and seductive charms of Lamia and the faery child who beguile the tragic heroes Lycius and the knight, joy and delight in Porphyro's desire for success in pursuing and seducing Madeline
- marvel at the power and defiance of Satan in the Extract from *Paradise Lost*, a villain who would rather reign in Hell than serve in Heaven, comic delight in the discourtesy and disrespect shown to Miss Gee by the Oxford Groupers, awe at the magnificence of the iceberg as it awaits its victim, the ill-fated Titanic
- engagement with Alec D'Urverville who is charming and likeable despite his seduction of Tess
- satisfaction at Tom Buchanan's deflation of Gatsby's facade, his exposure of the hollowness of Gatsby's dream when he calls him Mr Nobody from Nowhere, intrigue at Daisy's being an alluring femme fatale figure with a mesmerising voice
- etc

Some students might consider a reader's potential :

- contempt for Willy who is an antagonist to Biff and, in his self-destruction, an antagonist to himself, contempt also for the woman who leads Willy astray, sympathy for Howard whom Willy sees as his adversary, contempt for him also in showing off with his technology and ignoring Willy's suffering
- mistrust of Bolingbroke in his pitting himself against Richard and in his construction of self-justifying arguments, disdain for his treatment of Richard who is God's appointed minister on earth

- horror at the behaviour and villainy of the brothers in *Isabella*, fear and suspicion at the wiles of Lamia and the faery child
- condemnation of the would-be lover of Jessie Cameron who is dull, overbearing and unnerving in contrast to the energetic Jessie who wants to escape his clutches, fear at the terrible defiance against goodness and God by Satan in the Extract from *Paradise Lost*, numbness or satisfaction for Chaucer's Lucifer who is in hell and cannot escape his misery, disdain for the gods in *Tithonus* who have lured him into a false sense of security only to betray him
- anger at Alec's calculating behaviour towards Tess and his rape of her
- contempt for the brutality of Tom Buchanan and his casual and cruel destruction of Gatsby and Wilson, disgust at Daisy's rejection of Gatsby and her seeming lack of remorse at the death of Myrtle
- etc

Some students might legitimately argue that in *Death of a Salesman*, there is no obvious villain/antagonist. Some students might argue that capitalism as a system is a villain and is attractive to various characters though not, in terms of the play, to audiences.

Accept arguments about villains being wickedly attractive to audiences or other characters in the texts.

#### **AO4 Explore connections across literary texts**

With respect to connections with the wider tragic genre students might focus on:

- the tragic aspect of villainy as seen in the characters and behaviour of Bolingbroke and The Woman in the drama texts, of Alec, Satan, the faery child and Lamia and Tom and Daisy Buchanan
- the aspect of antagonists pitted against the protagonist seen in Bolingbroke in his challenge to Richard, Howard whose self-centredness and unsympathetic attitude towards Willy results in Willy being fired, Tom Buchanan who defeats Gatsby in securing Daisy, Alec who manipulates and rapes Tess, Emer who sends her son to fight Cuchulain, Lamia who weaves Lycius into her spell
- the aspect of the emotional effect that tragedy has on audiences and readers seen in the wicked pleasure or otherwise that might be felt in relation to the tragic villains/antagonists
- etc

#### **AO3 Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received**

With respect to contextual issues arising from the question and the play students might focus on:

- the social contexts in which villains/antagonists thrive, for example Howard, Tom Buchanan, the Oxford Groupers
- the gender context that informs the villainy of Alec, Daisy, Jessie Cameron's would-be-lover, la belle dame
- the supernatural/other world context which shapes the villainy of Lamia, la belle dame, Emer, the Druids and Concubar
- the context of power as seen in Bolingbroke's antagonism towards Richard, Satan in his defiance against God
- etc

#### **AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts**

With respect to dramatic/authorial method students might focus on:

- structural issues relating to where the antagonist/villain appears in the narrative and where he or she might provide the reader with wicked pleasure, etc
- the different settings chosen by writers in which their villains/antagonists can carry out their villainy or challenge the tragic heroes, for example Hell in Extract from *Paradise Lost*, Florence as a backdrop for the brothers' villainy in *Isabella*, the Plaza Hotel for the confrontation between Tom and Gatsby, etc
- the use of dialogue, language, dramatic action, exits and entrances, soliloquies, flashbacks in the drama texts to foreground the villains/antagonists' actions and whether they excite wicked pleasure in audiences, etc
- the narrative or poetic methods in prose and poetry texts that are used in relation to the behaviour of villains/antagonists and whether or not they fill readers with wicked pleasure
- etc

Given that this is a **closed book** exam, comments on the ways meanings are shaped may be generalised.

**AO1 Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression**

With respect to competence in writing focus needs to be on the:

- quality of argument
- organisation of ideas
- use of appropriate concepts and terminology
- technical accuracy

**Accept any valid interpretations, any valid comments on and any relevant integrated comment on dramatic methods that are embedded into the argument.**

**Question 08**

**0 8**

‘The pride displayed by tragic heroes and tragic heroines elevates them rather than diminishes them.’

To what extent do you agree with this view in relation to **two** texts you have studied?

Remember to include in your answer relevant comment on the ways the writers have shaped meanings.

**[25 marks]**

**Some possible content** is given below. It suggests some of the ways the Assessment Objectives might be addressed, but as ‘significance’ relates to contextual, structural, linguistic and interpretative issues, some ideas will inevitably address more than one AO.

Examiners must also remember that because students have read and studied the two texts through the lens of **tragedy**, the AOs must necessarily be connected to that genre through the task.

This is a **closed book** exam, so while it is expected that students will use quotations when writing about the plays it is also legitimate to make more general reference.

Please refer to pages 4 – 7.

**AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations**

With respect to meanings and interpretations, students may choose to look at all sides of the debate or just one. It is the quality of the student’s response that matters.

Arguments in agreement with the given critical view might consider:

- Willy’s defiance and sense of his own worth in not wanting charity, in wanting the best for his sons, in wanting to provide for his family
- Richard’s pride in speaking of the significance of his role as king and of his divine right which elevates him above Bolingbroke
- Lycius’ pride in the glory of his love for Lamia, Porphyro’s pride in braving the wrath of Madeline’s family, his proud self-belief in his dealings with Angela and Madeline
- Tithonus’ pride in not wanting to denigrate his love for Eos and hers for him by being so old and withered; Cuchulain’s pride that leads to his fighting with the waves; the pride of Satan who stands defiant against God, Jessie’s pride as she rejects the advances of her would-be lover
- Tess’ pride in not wanting to accept the help and attentions of Alec and in believing that, however wretched, she can still work
- Gatsby’s pride in believing he can achieve his dream, his pride which sets him above all others
- etc

Some students might consider:

- Willy’s pride which makes him ridiculous when he refuses the offer of work from Charley and when he refuses to accept the warnings about the young Biff from Howard
- Richard’s pride which is arrogant - seen when he ignores the advice of Gaunt and York, his pride in the opening scene when he makes a bad judgement in stopping the trial by combat between Mowbray and Bolingbroke and by meting out unequal punishments
- the pride of Porphyro which leads to his controlling events in Madeline’s bedchamber, Lycius’ pride in ignoring Apollonius and pursuing his own fateful destiny, the knight’s pride in telling the tale of his enchantment with the faery child given that he is now so forlorn and woebegone

- Chaucer’s heroes in general whose pride makes them deserving of their wretchedness, Lucifer and Adam in particular, Cuchulain’s pride which takes him into the arms of the young woman and his ignoring of his family, Miss Gee’s pride which prevents her from engaging in society, her going to the doctor’s too late, her buttoning her clothes up to her neck which comicalises her, the pride and arrogance of the designers and builders of the Titanic in setting humankind up against the natural world, Jessie’s pride which keeps her arguing with the gypsy boy instead of taking heed of the incoming tide
- Tess’ pride in not asking for help from Angel’s parents which could have eased her misery and prevented her from being prey to Alec
- Gatsby’s pride in believing he can repeat the past which makes him look foolish, his pride in maintaining that Daisy has always loved him when it is clear to the other characters and readers that she has loved Tom
- etc

#### **AO4 Explore connections across literary texts**

With respect to connections with the wider tragic genre students might focus on:

- the aspect of tragic heroes and tragic heroines as seen in Willy, Richard, Tess, Gatsby, Jessie Cameron, Satan, Miss Gee, Lycius, Porphyro
- the aspect of pride as seen in Richard’s defiance in the face of Bolingbroke’s deposition of him, Willy’s pride in defying Howard, Miss Gee’s pride in protecting her dignity, Tithonus’ pride in wanting to die, Lycius’ pride in wanting to display Lamia to his fellow men
- the aspect of tragic stature and elevation of the hero as seen in Richard’s magnificence in the deposition scene, of Willy’s outburst about what he wants for himself and his family, in Tithonus’ wanting to be part of the natural cycle of life, of Jessie’s refusal to marry a man she does not love, of Cuchulain’s fighting with the waves, of Porphyro’s proud confidence that leads him to brave Madeline’s family
- the aspect of tragic diminution as seen in Richard’s behaviour towards his uncles, in Willy’s relationship with the woman, in Lycius’ insistence on a public wedding, in Tithonus’ complaining to the gods, in Cuchulain’s abandoning of his family for glory, of the pride of the constructors of the Titanic for vanity
- etc

#### **AO3 Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received**

With respect to contextual issues arising from the question and the play students might focus on:

- the context of power as seen in Richard’s confrontation with Bolingbroke over kingship, of Cuchulain’s elevated position amongst the Red Branch kings, of Porphyro’s sexual power over Madeline
- the social context that shapes Willy’s pride and belief in the American Dream, the fateful wedding of Lamia and Lycius which contrasts with their earlier happy isolation, the local community of Miss Gee in which she struggles to have an identity, the rural 19<sup>th</sup> century world of Tess which impacts heavily on her position
- the gender context of *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* where the knight’s pride allows him to be seduced by the faery child, Gatsby’s pride in valuing himself in relation to Daisy
- the psychological context relating to self-worth, pride and self-belief as seen in the defiance of Richard, in Tithonus’ musings, in Gatsby’s behaviour and obsession, in Tess’ thought processes
- etc

**AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts**

With respect to dramatic/authorial method students might focus on:

- structural issues relating to where the tragic hero and tragic heroine display their pride
- the different settings chosen by authors which are a backdrop to the displays of pride of the tragic heroes and heroines in terms of elevation or diminution
- the use of dialogue, language, dramatic action, exits and entrances, soliloquies, flashbacks in the drama texts to foreground the pride of the tragic heroes and tragic heroines and whether this is judged to elevate or diminish them
- the narrative or poetic methods in prose and poetry texts that are used in relation to the pride of the tragic heroes and tragic heroines and whether this elevates or diminishes them
- etc

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With respect to competence in writing focus needs to be on the:

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