

**AS LEVEL**

**Examiners' report**

# **ENGLISH LITERATURE**

**H072**

For first teaching in 2015

**H072/01 Summer 2022 series**

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## Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates.

The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. A selection of candidate answers is also provided. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.

A full copy of the question paper and the mark scheme can be downloaded from OCR.

### Advance Information for Summer 2022 assessments

To support student revision, advance information was published about the focus of exams for Summer 2022 assessments. Advance information was available for most GCSE, AS and A Level subjects, Core Maths, FSMQ, and Cambridge Nationals Information Technologies. You can find more information on our [website](#).

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## Paper 1 series overview

H072/01 (Shakespeare and poetry pre-1900) is one of two exam components for the AS English Literature. The component comprises two sections.

Section 1 requires the candidates to answer one question from a choice of six Shakespeare plays. Each question has an either/or choice and requires the candidate to discuss a specific topic taking account of a prompt quotation.

Section 2 requires the candidates to answer one question from a choice of five pre-1900 poets. The question directs the candidate towards a specific poem or extract from a longer poem, which is the principal focus of the question. Each question comprises a single poem or extract with no choice offered. The candidates are required to analyse the poem/extract closely and make links between the set poem and other poems by the given poet or, if it is an extract, to the rest of the poem.

Section 1 assesses the four assessment objectives AO1, AO2, AO3 and AO5. Section 2 assesses the four assessment objectives AO1, AO2, AO3 and AO4.

The fundamental principle of the marking is holistic: each response is given one mark out of 30. This reflects how the response has met the level criteria as a whole, as set out in the mark scheme.

In both sections, AO2 and AO1 are more heavily weighted. To do well on this paper, candidates need to have sufficiently close familiarity with their texts to:

- structure an argument which is genuinely responsive to the question
- develop their argument through detailed textual reference and discussion of effects.

For Section 1, knowledge of productions and specific references to critical views and perspectives help candidates to achieve with respect to AO5, but these should complement, and not be a substitute for, close familiarity with the written text. Relevant discussion of dramatic effects or actors' delivery of lines within a particular production is recognised as achievement with respect to AO5. Relevant discussion of Shakespeare's construction of dramatic tension or his use of stagecraft is recognised as achievement with respect to AO2.

For Section 2, responsiveness to the question necessitates a focus on the given extract. Sound comprehension of and some range across the extract are necessary for mid-level achievement. Candidates must know the other set poems well enough to select cross-references and make connections apposite to the question. However, it is expected that most of the discussion of effects uses quotation from the extract. A lack of focus on the extract is regarded as a partial attempt at the question.

### Section 2: Use of the extract

It is expected that between two-thirds and three-quarters of a Section 2 response will focus on, quote from and analyse effects in the given extract.

Candidates should be mindful that AO3 is the least-weighted assessment objective in both sections. References to social, historical and biographical context are rewarded only where they genuinely contribute to the interpretations of the text being debated. Higher-level responses acknowledge that the literary texts set for study tend not simply to reproduce dominant values but also mediate emergent values and/or in some ways contest dominant ideology. For example, higher-level responses tend to avoid reductive generalisations about, for example, gender politics during a particular era. Some higher-level responses also focus on genre, an element of context whose impact on a text can sometimes be discussed more convincingly than sweeping claims about the culture or politics of a historical period.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally did the following:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally did the following:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• noticed all of the key words in their questions, allowing space for consideration of the text in light of each key word</li> <li>• wrote essays with clear, well-structured arguments</li> <li>• demonstrated detailed knowledge and understanding of their texts, particularly in their selection of quotation</li> <li>• selected and convincingly discussed effects of language, form and structure which genuinely developed their argument.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• responded partially to questions, sometimes deploying pre-prepared material of limited or tenuous relevance</li> <li>• wrote with little sense of direction or debate, sometimes without paragraphing</li> <li>• used few quotations, or few relevant quotations, perhaps as a result of insufficient textual knowledge</li> <li>• identified action or discussed character with little sense of authorial methods, sometimes drifting into narrative recount</li> <li>• identified word class within quotations, with more or less accuracy, without offering critical analysis of authorial methods.</li> </ul>

## Section 1 overview

*Hamlet* was by some way the most popular text. *The Tempest* was also popular. There were far fewer responses to *Measure for Measure* and *Twelfth Night*. *Richard III* and *Coriolanus* were the least popular texts.

Candidates who did well in Section 1 generally did the following:	Candidates who did less well in Section 1 generally did the following:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>among a range of textual references, discussed in detail at least 2–3 moments of the play which were highly relevant to their selected question</li> <li>quoted extensively and pertinently from the play</li> <li>selected quotations whose language developed their argument and interpretation in response to the question</li> <li>recognised that there were multiple key words in each question and devoted time and space to the consideration of each key word</li> <li>used the question to prompt a debate, considering more than one side of the given proposition</li> <li>discussed the play in ways which were genuinely informed by different interpretations they had engaged with</li> <li>referred selectively to aspects of historical context so as to enrich their interpretation of textual detail.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>referred to parts of the play which were not entirely relevant to their selected question</li> <li>made little use of (or attempted to fabricate) relevant quotations</li> <li>discussed characters' traits and actions without attempting analysis of language, structure or form</li> <li>focused on one key word in the question at the expense of others, sometimes stretching this word and writing about a tenuously related theme rather than answering the question set</li> <li>wrote as if only one interpretation of the play were possible, focusing on their approval or disapproval of characters' behaviour and generally presenting their opinions on characters as facts</li> <li>used aspects of the play to make sweeping assertions about the treatment of women in the Elizabethan / Jacobean period.</li> </ul>

### Question 1 (a)

#### 1 *Coriolanus*

Either

(a) 'What matters in *Coriolanus* is winning.'

How far and in what ways do you agree with this comment on the play *Coriolanus*?

**[30]**

No responses to this question were seen.

## Question 1 (b)

(b) 'Coriolanus's tragedy is that he's bad at relationships.'

How far and in what ways do you agree with this view of the role of Coriolanus?

[30]

No responses to this question were seen.

## Question 2 (a)

### 2 *Hamlet*

Either

(a) 'The play *Hamlet* shows the unreliability of human love.'

How far and in what ways do you agree with this view of the play *Hamlet*?

[30]

This was the most popular question in Section 1, with a wide range of quality in the responses.

The highest-level responses built strong arguments discussing various relationships in the play: Hamlet–Gertrude, Hamlet–Ophelia, Gertrude–Claudius and Hamlet–Horatio. Some responses gave an impressive overview of the range of relationships, articulating distinctions between familial, romantic and platonic love.

In addition to the relationships identified above, some candidates were able to use textual detail convincingly to explore the reliability of the love between Hamlet and his father. In other cases, a focus on this father–son relationship tended to take candidates away from the question and towards discussions of Hamlet's delay.

A minority of candidates responded indirectly to the question. Some attempted to discuss Claudius's unreliable love for his brother but struggled to use textual detail to make the word 'love' relevant to their relationship. For some, an attempt to discuss Hamlet's love for himself, with quotation taken largely from his soliloquys, was regarded as a partial attempt at the question. A number of candidates, for example, quoted 'To be or not to be'; few were able to make this relevant to the question.

Many responses quoted aptly from exchanges between Hamlet and Ophelia. Mid-level responses tended to focus on Hamlet's unkindness to Ophelia; higher-level responses used both textual detail and reference to productions to contrast this with textual evidence of their past relationship, thus focusing on Hamlet's inconstancy from Ophelia's perspective. A number of responses referred to Ophelia's suicide straightforwardly as a consequence of her being rejected by Hamlet, without any acknowledgement of Polonius's death. Some of the strongest responses balanced discussion of the unreliability of love in two or three relationships with convincing analysis of the constancy between Hamlet and Horatio, quoting effectively from Act 3 Scene 2 ('Nay, do not think I flatter...') and Act 5 Scene 2 ('Good night sweet prince').

## Question 2 (b)

(b) 'Fortinbras and Laertes, the revengers, are portrayed as self-important and cruel.'

How far and in what ways do you agree with this view of the roles of Fortinbras and Laertes?

[30]

This was the less popular of the Hamlet questions, perhaps because its focus on minor characters relied on secure textual knowledge of some of the play's less prominent scenes. Many candidates who chose this question were able to quote aptly from Act 4 Scene 4 and Act 4 Scene 5, as well as from Laertes' exchanges with Ophelia in Act 1. The strongest responses were informed by a sense of revenge tragedy as a genre. Some of these interrogated rather than accepting the implication in the question that characters in revenge tragedy who are driven to act honourably should therefore be condemned as 'cruel'. Many candidates took the opportunity to analyse both characters as foils to Hamlet, appreciating the effects on the portrayal of the protagonist of the characterisation of Laertes and Fortinbras. In doing so, many demonstrated an analytical approach to structure characteristic of higher-level responses.

Exemplar 1 below is an extract from a response which was placed in Level 6.

## Exemplar 1

		<p>Later in the play, Laertes becomes a reckless revenger, whom he is presented as both cruel and valiant. At the time, revenge was a religious sin, described as a kind of 'wild justice' by writers of Elizabethan writers such as Francis Bacon. Laertes exemplifies this impiety; he makes 'vows to the blackest devil'. The positive connotation of 'blackest devil' suggests Laertes' determination, as he is almost spitting his words out in anger. Shakespeare's use of the noun 'vows' connotes deep, unwavering sincerity. Laertes' blasphemy is emphasised as he desires to 'cut [Hamlet's] throat i'th' church'. The stark juxtaposition between such a violent act and the 'church' renders Laertes even more devilish and selfish. Shakespeare goes on to show the consequences of Laertes' brutality, as he is 'justly killed by [his] own treachery'. However,</p>
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		parts of this play do hint at the idea that Laertes' desire for imperious familial revenge is noble and selfless. Hamlet himself desires this reckless quality - as he argues that he 'lacks gall' or <del>the</del> dangerous determination, and argues that he is passively 'impregnant of [his] cause', suggesting a lack of will and motivation. It is argued that Hamlet's action is 'eaten up by thought' (Hazlitt), and so Laertes' snap-judgements and haste may be admired. Shakespeare may be playing into the <del>po</del> positive classical interpretation of energy as opposed to the contemporary Christian interpretation. This is characteristic of Shakespeare - at a time of religious change (the Reformation), he uses humanist thinking to challenge the idea that Laertes is bloodthirsty, self-important and cruel; perhaps he is honourable instead.
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This response extract integrates relevant contextual knowledge (Bacon, Shakespeare's oeuvre) and different interpretations (Hazlitt) into a line of argument which is highly responsive to the prompt quotation (agreeing with 'cruel' but defending Laertes from the charge of 'self-importance'), deploying pertinent quotations which are critically addressed.

### Question 3 (a)

#### 3 *Measure for Measure*

##### Either

(a) '*Measure for Measure* suggests much of human life is about deception.'

How far and in what ways do you agree with this view of *Measure for Measure*?

[30]

Candidates who selected this question generally responded confidently to the theme of deception. Discussion of Angelo's duplicity dominated some responses, allowing for mostly relevant exploration of his treatment of Isabella and her experience of his abuse of his power. Some responses drifted into extended discussion of men's superiority over women and the value of chastity in Jacobean society, at the expense of question focus. Some responses used the bed trick as evidence of Isabella's ability to deceive, arguing for the proposition in the question by suggesting that even the purest character in the play resorts to deception. Most higher-level responses devoted a substantial part of their response to the Duke, discussing Lucio's identification of his duplicity, and arguing that much of human life is bound to be about deception in a state whose leader is so given to subterfuge. Although candidates were quick to refer to *Measure for Measure* as a 'problem play', there was little appreciation of deception as a feature of the genre, or discussion of the comedic outcomes afforded to characters' who had deceived others.

### Question 3 (b)

(b) 'The play suggests Angelo will never make a good husband.'

How far and in what ways do you agree with this view of the role of Angelo in *Measure for Measure*? [30]

This was the less popular of the two questions on *Measure for Measure*. Most candidates who chose it did so with sufficient textual reference for an essay on Angelo. Many used similar material to that seen in responses to Question 3 (a), this time deployed to argue that Angelo is easily tempted. In general, question focus tended to be less secure with 3 (b) than 3 (a). Some responses argued that Angelo would make a poor leader rather than a poor husband. There was little attempt to discuss any of Angelo's virtues, perceived or otherwise, so that the proposition in the question was largely accepted and rehearsed, rather than considered and debated. The question also seemed to uncover a degree of textual insecurity, with partial understanding of some of the quotations used (e.g., 'We must not make a scarecrow of the law').

### Question 4 (a)

4 *Richard III*

Either

(a) 'The play *Richard III* suggests it is easier to get a kingdom than to keep it.'

How far and in what ways do you agree with this view of the play? [30]

No responses to this question were seen.

### Question 4 (b)

(b) 'Richard's brothers, King Edward and Clarence, are portrayed as weak, guilty men.'

How far and in what ways do you agree with this view of the roles of King Edward and Clarence in *Richard III*? [30]

No responses to this question were seen.

## Question 5 (a)

### 5 *The Tempest*

#### Either

(a) '*The Tempest* suggests that freedom must be earned.'

How far and in what ways do you agree with this view of *The Tempest*?

[30]

Of the two questions on *The Tempest*, responses to this question seemed to make use of a wider range of textual reference. Some strong responses built an argument around the contrast between Ariel and Caliban: quotations from Act 1 Scene 2 were used to explore the connection between labour and freedom for Ariel; further detailed reference to Act 1 Scene 2 and to Act 2 Scene 2 made for comparative discussion of the absence of a connection between labour and freedom for Caliban.

The character of Miranda was discussed to good effect in light of the question. Some higher-level responses argued that, in her consistent deference and obedience to Prospero, she does enough to earn her freedom, but that her marriage to Ferdinand is, at best, a limited kind of freedom. This line of argument facilitated different ways of addressing AO5 and AO3, with references to stage interpretations and Jacobean expectations of Prospero's power over his daughter, and the role of marriage in the genre of comedy.

Prospero was also discussed to good effect by a number of candidates. Some lower-level responses asserted that Prospero had such power that freedom was already his, without his having to earn it. Some higher-level responses discussed Prospero's character arc in a more nuanced way, arguing that he earned his freedom from the island by giving up his magic and relinquishing his power over others.

## Question 5 (b)

(b) 'If you treat a person badly, he will become wicked.'

How far and in what ways do you agree with this view of the role of Caliban in *The Tempest*?  
[30]

This was the more popular of the questions on *The Tempest*, with most candidates well prepared to write an essay on Caliban and able to adapt their ideas to at least part of the question. The majority of responses quoted and analysed Prospero's treatment of Caliban; many also explored Miranda's expressed attitudes towards him. Discussion of Caliban's interactions with Stephano and Trinculo were generally helpful in evidencing good textual knowledge, particularly in exploring Caliban's violent intentions towards Prospero.

Higher-level responses engaged as much in debating the idea of Caliban's wickedness as evidencing his being treated badly. Some also found textual evidence useful for supporting or disputing a causal connection between the two. Close analysis of the dialogue in Act 1 Scene 2 between Prospero, Miranda and Caliban often proved fruitful: there was relevant discussion of the connotations of Prospero's word 'poisonous', his reference to Caliban's heritage ('thy wicked dam') and the nature / nurture antithesis voiced by Prospero. Many candidates referred effectively to the turning point in their relationship ('till thou didst seek to violate / The honour of my child' ... 'O ho! Would 't had been done'), arguing that Caliban's lack of remorse contributed to the impression that his wickedness predated his ill treatment. Lower-level responses were sometimes imprecise in the handling of this textual detail, with occasional references to Caliban having 'raped' Miranda. Other responses used critical views to read this exchange in nuanced ways, discussing Prospero's failure to love and socialise Caliban, and Prospero's inattentiveness in allowing Caliban to attempt with Miranda what would only be natural. A number of responses included relevant discussion of Caliban's speech in Act 3 Scene 2, 'the isle is full of noises', arguing that the beauty of his poetry contributed to the portrayal of a character who was not inherently wicked.

In general, the question prompted a productive range of more or less explicitly post-colonialist approaches to the text, with candidates making relevant and convincing reference to Jacobean colonialist attitudes and to modern audiences for whom Caliban's violent anger towards Prospero might seem justified.

Exemplar 2 below is from a borderline Level 5/6 response.

## Exemplar 2

		Caliban himself describes his actions towards Prospero and Miranda upon <del>the</del> their initial arrival to the island as an act of love. He claims he " <del>showed</del> " showed them "the isle" Caliban taking the active form indicates to the reader that Caliban was initially a helpful presence who through his great knowledge of the isle enabled Prospero and Miranda to become settled on the island. This is reinforced when Caliban meets Trinculo & Stephano in which he mirrors his initial actions towards Prospero & Miranda by regaling them of all the 'wonders' of the isle. It is of interest to note <del>that</del> when Caliban is speaking of the isle, his manner of speech changes drastically. He begins to speak in <del>blank</del> verse, a type of speech typically reserved for high status characters instead of prose, moreover, the structure of his
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		switch to a fluid iambic pentameter, with each line containing roughly 10 syllables.
		This change in Caliban's speech suggests
		he's not wicked and evil as he is able to eloquently dictate himself, implying that he is a virtuous character, this is juxtaposed by his later language such as the line "Ban Ban Caliban" in which he reverts to predominantly monosyllabic prose. This implies to the reader that Caliban was tainted by Stephano & Trinculo.
		It can be argued that Caliban's affinity for the island unlocks <del>at</del> his true nature in which he is an eloquent & knowledgeable individual despite his primitive appearance and that after being subjugated by those who came onto his island he was tainted & regressed into the wicked and evil being he is commonly seen as. The 2011 production of the <del>film</del> <i>Tempest</i> in which Caliban's appearance is predominantly dark skin, yet freckles and patches of white skin are present throughout his body, suggesting that Caliban at his core was pure of heart but was corrupted and turned evil by those who came to his island.
		On the other hand, it can be seen that Caliban at his core <del>was</del> <sup>is</sup> a truly immoral and wicked character. This is

This extract response's strengths include detailed textual knowledge, as the candidate draws pertinent quotations from different parts of the play. It uses a reference to a production of the play to support its discussion of textual detail. It also contains some inaccuracies, such as the suggestion that Caliban's song at the end of Act 2 is in prose. The beginning of the subsequent paragraph is included here as an example of how a well-structured argument may progress to consider different sides of the debate.

## Question 6 (a)

### 6 *Twelfth Night*

#### Either

(a) 'All the characters of the play are transformed by desire.'

How far and in what ways do you agree with this view of *Twelfth Night*?

[30]

Although the more popular of the questions on *Twelfth Night*, candidates did not always grapple with the nuances of the statement. The word 'desire' prompted some candidates to write about 'love' in the play, disregarding the notion of 'transformation'. For others, the word 'transformed' was treated as an invitation to write about 'disguise', with assertions that Viola's disguise triggers the desire of Olivia and Orsino. Although these aspects of the play may be relevant to the question, they required more careful handling than they sometimes received. Stronger responses applied the question insightfully to Malvolio, arguing that his desire for social elevation rather than for Olivia transforms his behaviour, and to Olivia, whose desire for Cesario shakes her from stubborn grief to impetuosity. As with responses on *Measure for Measure*, AO3 tended to be addressed through general discussion of the historical oppression of women rather than engaging with these ideas in a more nuanced way, and often did not engage with conventions of the genre which would have been useful.

## Question 6 (b)

(b) 'Viola and Olivia both learn the importance of taking risks.'

How far and in what ways do you agree with this view of the roles of Viola and Olivia in *Twelfth Night*?

[30]

The small number of answers to this question included some strong responses. There was good use of the question to explore the parallels between Viola and Olivia, such as their recent bereavement and their relative independence as women. The risks taken by Olivia in refusing Orsino as a suitor and in running her own household were discussed with more detailed textual reference than the risks taken by Viola. Nonetheless, critical views on masks and self-presentation supported some good exploration of the 'importance' of Viola's risky use of disguise. In some responses, discussion of the historical repercussions of childlessness and the centrality of marriage, in terms both of social expectations and genre conventions, supported exploration of the characters' gains from the risks they take.

## Section 2 overview

Christina Rossetti was by far the most popular poet in this section. *The Merchant's Tale* was also popular, and there were a number of responses on *Paradise Lost* and a smaller number on Coleridge. Tennyson was the least popular choice

Candidates who did well in Section 2 generally did the following:	Candidates who did less well in Section 2 generally did the following:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• devoted between two-thirds and three-quarters of their response to the extract</li> <li>• referred only to details outside the extract which were pertinent to their argument in response to the question</li> <li>• structured their response around instances of language, imagery and verse form which were pertinent to and generated different lines of interpretation in response to the question</li> <li>• Discussed effects in ways which built on their study of key themes and concerns in the set text as whole.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• used only one or two quotations from the extract, focusing more of their response on other poems / other parts of the poem</li> <li>• referred to other poems which were at best partially relevant to the question</li> <li>• seemed to work their way indiscriminately through the extract, without constructing an argument in response to the question</li> <li>• attempted to discuss effects of language features in ways that revealed partial comprehension of the text</li> <li>• made entirely generalised references to metre and rhyme scheme, without making convincing connections between form and meaning</li> <li>• deployed biographical knowledge of the poet without much relevance to analysis of the extract.</li> </ul>



## Question 7

### 7 Geoffrey Chaucer: *The Merchant's Prologue and Tale*

Discuss the way jealousy is portrayed in this extract from *The Merchant's Tale*.

In your answer explore the author's use of language, imagery and verse form, and consider ways in which you find the extract characteristic of *The Merchant's Prologue and Tale*. **[30]**

Responses to this question generally used the extract well, exploring the imagery of 'the fyr of jalousie' which 'brent' in Januarie and his physical control of May with 'hond on hire alway'. The latter facilitated good connections to earlier moments in the poem, such as when the portrayal of Januarie as repugnant invites sympathy for his oppressed young wife. Some responses were more convincingly question-focused than others in discussing Januarie's blindness: lower-level responses stated that his blindness was the cause of his jealousy; higher-level responses appreciated the irony of blindness being visited upon a character whose paranoid jealousy had led him to look everywhere but fail to see what was right in front of him. In the strongest responses, this sensitivity to irony was informed by consistent understanding of genre conventions: AO3 was addressed most effectively through knowledge of the fabliau form, and the use of the characters of Damyan and May to subvert the trope of courtly love. Candidates with this sense of genre tended to be more successful in arguing that Damyan and May are also characterised as jealous; in some lower-level responses, discussion of Damyan and May tended to conflate jealousy with lust.

Exemplar 3 shown overleaf is from a response which was placed in Level 6.

## Exemplar 3

		<p>Chaucer uses presents jealousy as a dangerous factor in May's oppression by revolting, adduced January. 'Jealousy leads January to impose oppressive measures on May', one metaphor is used to convey January's wish that she remains <del>like</del> a 'turtle', or 'turtle dove', emblematic of fidelity. Although this would be <sup>contemporarily</sup> conventionally expected of women, who were biblically commanded to 'submit to [their] husbands', <del>May's</del> expectations of May are seen as unjust because of the repugnant depiction of January. 'He had hand on her always' presents his ever-lasting physical command of May; the alliteration, or repeated 'n' sound, almost creates the idea of invasive heavy breathing, connoting January's 'und physical reality' (Pearsall) forced onto May because of his jealousy. A repeated negative is also used</p>
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		<p>used by January - 'ne in noon - nevertene'... - to convey his refusal to leave May. This is characteristic of the poem; May is often subject to January's 'stark reshine' - the simile here implies of her disgust. <del>Through</del> <sup>leading to something</sup> this portrayal of jealousy as 'physically repulsive', January is mocked, again fulfilling the purpose of the 'fabliau'. It is argued that January is presented with 'an undertone of disgust' (Pearsall), and that rhyming couplet 'always' and 'May' humorously suggests the winning, everlasting pain that May must endure.</p>
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Earlier in the response, the candidate demonstrates detailed knowledge of the text by identifying 'wepeth and ... wailleth' as an echo of the opening of the tale, in which the Merchant refers to his own experience of 'Weping and wailing, care and other sorwe'. In this section, there is close, purposeful analysis of Chaucer's use of imagery and language, together with concise, pertinent quotation from elsewhere in the tale, to connect Januarie's jealousy to his oppression of May. The references to critics were not rewarded for AO5, which is not assessed in Section 2; but they in no way impede the argument or analysis and have no adverse effect on the mark given.

## Question 8

### 8 John Milton: *Paradise Lost*, Books 9 & 10

Discuss ways in which Milton portrays the need to adjust to life after the Fall in this extract from *Paradise Lost* Book 10.

In your answer explore the author's use of language, imagery and verse form, and consider ways in which you find this extract characteristic of *Paradise Lost* Books 9 and 10. **[30]**

While most responses included some early discussion of 'Th' inclement seasons', many struggled thereafter with the combination of extract and question focus ('the need to adjust to life after the Fall'). Some reverted to broad interpretations of the whole set text, loosely discussing Milton's presentation of God or of Eve, rather than aspects of the extract. Indeed, some lower-level responses struggled with the brief reference to Eve in the extract ignoring or misunderstanding the statement 'nor Eve / Felt less remorse', inconsistent as it seemed with prepared ideas about Milton's misogyny and the characterisation of Eve.

There was generally good appreciation of the physical discomfort to which Adam and Eve had to adjust, with relevant connections to earlier moments in the poem, such as the earth shaking and Christ's pity for their nakedness. Some lower-level responses quoted but struggled to discuss convincingly the extract's richly textured references to the making of fire or ending 'in dust'. Lower-level responses also tended to make broad references to 'prelapsarian language' and 'postlapsarian language', without any textual evidence of analysis to make the distinction meaningful. Higher-level responses focused as much on the postlapsarian need for humility and prayer as on physical hardship. Few responses, however, remarked on the repetition between lines 28–33 and 40–45 of the extract, or seemed to appreciate it as a structural feature suggestive of Adam and Eve's postlapsarian deference.

## Question 9

### 9 Samuel Taylor Coleridge: *Selected Poems*

Discuss Coleridge's presentation of human suffering in 'The Pains of Sleep'.

In your answer explore the author's use of language, imagery and verse form, and consider ways in which you find the poem characteristic of Coleridge's work in your selection. **[30]**

Responses to this question made much explicit use of biographical details. To some extent this was necessary: the poem is directly autobiographical; discussion of Coleridge's withdrawal from opium was usually relevant, and references to Sara Hutchinson helped to explain the closing couplet. However, in lower-level responses the deployment of background knowledge tended to displace rather than support analysis of the extract. In some, the question was answered with an account of biographical causes of suffering, rather than analysis of its artistic depiction. The emphasis on biography also seemed to direct candidates away from a full question focus: responses tended to discuss personal rather than 'human' suffering.

The general tendency in lower-level responses was to attempt to discuss effects by lifting words out of their immediate context, for example listing words which belonged to 'a semantic field of anguish'. In some lower-level responses, this approach revealed a lack of basic comprehension. Discussion of the 'moving lips or bended knees' on line 3, for instance, would consist of strong assertions about how desperately Coleridge would pray not to suffer nightly torment, without acknowledgement of line 2, 'it hath not been my use to pray'.

Higher-level responses maintained a sense of the whole poem in their analysis of its parts and discussed the presentation of human suffering in terms of Coleridge's religious thinking as well as his opium addiction.

#### Assessment for learning



Some students might benefit from being reminded of the centrality of the basic sense of a poem to any meaningful discussion of its effects. It may be helpful to share examples of analysis which contains misunderstandings of recently studied poems, allowing students to identify for themselves the risks of lifting quotations out of a partially understood context.

## Question 10

### 10 Alfred, Lord Tennyson: *Maud*

Discuss ways in which the narrator's perceptions in this extract from *Maud* are affected by his state-of-mind.

In your answer explore the author's use of language, imagery and verse form, and consider ways in which you find the extract characteristic of *Maud*. **[30]**

No responses to this question were seen.

## Question 11

### 11 Christina Rossetti: *Selected Poems*

Discuss how Rossetti explores the theme of temptation in this extract from 'Goblin Market'.

In your answer explore the author's use of language, imagery and verse form, and consider ways in which you find the extract characteristic of Rossetti's work in your selection. **[30]**

This was by far the most answered question in the paper, with a wide range in the quality of responses seen. In general, candidates showed good, detailed knowledge of the set poems. For some, however, this was demonstrated at the expense of the required focus on the extract. A number of candidates began their response by naming four or five poems which they felt were relevant to the theme of temptation and devoting two-thirds to three-quarters of their writing to discussion of these poems, often with plenty of relevant quotations. Responses with this approach were regarded as partial attempts at the question. Some strong candidates with imbalanced answers underachieved for this reason, with extreme cases featuring no more than one or two quotations from the extract and three other poems explored in detail.

Among responses which did focus sufficiently on the extract, connections made to other poems varied in their usefulness. Discussion of the consequences of temptation for Maude Clare was often used to good effect, with connections made to 'lilies' in both poems, as well as the social phenomenon of fallen women more generally. The warning tale of Jeanie from later in 'Goblin Market' was another connection used to good effect; some higher-level responses used it as a reference point in exploring the happy ending finally afforded to Laura. 'Shut Out' and 'Twice' were also used in ways that supported question focus. 'Soeur Louise de la Miséricorde' was used well by some candidates, though for others led to a drift away from the theme of temptation and towards a broader discussion of female desire. Some connections proved impossible to make relevant, such as an attempt to read 'Echo' as an expression of temptation, without any sense of its speaker being beyond the grave. 'No, Thank You, John' was used unconvincingly in some lower-level responses: these asserted that the speaker resisted temptation in rejecting John, resorting to biographical detail of Rossetti's refusal of suitors rather than any textual analysis to suggest that the speaker had ever felt tempted by him. The same poem was used more effectively in higher-level responses which devoted part of their argument to the depiction of the goblins in the extract, and by extension to Rossetti's portrayal of men as unattractively persistent in their attempts to lure women into sex outside marriage.

As with responses to Question 8 on *Paradise Lost*, the richly relevant material at the end of the extract was overlooked by many candidates: a minority of responses explored the sequence of similes which describes Laura leaning into her temptation. As with answers to Question 9 on 'The Pains of Sleep', quotation from the extract sometimes revealed partial comprehension of the poem. For example, a number of candidates incorrectly attributed Laura's direct speech ('We must not...') to Lizzie. This was symptomatic of a tendency within lower-level responses to give a reading of 'Goblin Market' as a whole, rather than focusing on the extract. In general, there was more awareness of the structural contrast between Lizzie's and Laura's responses to temptation than of the extent to which, in the extract, both characters experience temptation.

There was convincing analysis of the effects of imagery and phonology in higher-level responses. In lower-level responses, description of metre and rhyme tended to be overly generalised, often irrelevant and sometimes inaccurate. Across all responses, little attention was paid to the poem's narrative form and the use of point of view in conveying the feelings of temptation: most candidates, for example, who quoted the anaphoric repetition of 'One hauls a basket / One bears a plate...' did so without any acknowledgement that the list occurs within Laura's direct speech, as she describes what she sees for the benefit of a sister who refuses to look.

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