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Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

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Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
In English Literature (4ET1)
Paper 02R: Modern Drama and Literary
Heritage Texts

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Paper Overview

This International GCSE 4ET1 02R English Literature examination consists of two sections (Modern Drama and Literary Heritage) and lasts for 1 hour and 30 minutes. This is an open book examination. The questions on this paper have been designed to enable candidates to show what they can achieve in relation to the detailed study of texts.

Section A - Modern Drama

Candidates answer one of the two questions based on the text they have studied. The text choices are:

A View from the Bridge – Arthur Miller

An Inspector Calls – J B Priestley

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time – Mark Haddon (adapted by Simon Stephens)

Kindertransport – Diane Samuels

Death and the King's Horseman – Wole Soyinka

The questions require candidates to draw on their knowledge of the play, to consider the writer's use of language, form and structure and to provide supporting examples. The Assessment Objectives assessed in Section A are:

AO1	Demonstrate a close knowledge and understanding of texts, maintaining a critical style and presenting an informed personal engagement.
AO2	Analyse the language, form and structure used by a writer to create meanings and effects.

Section B - Literary Heritage

Candidates are required to answer one of the two questions based on the text they have studied. The text choices for Section B are:

Romeo and Juliet – William Shakespeare

Macbeth – William Shakespeare

The Merchant of Venice – William Shakespeare

Pride and Prejudice – Jane Austen

Great Expectations – Charles Dickens

The Scarlet Letter – Nathaniel Hawthorne

The questions in Section B, like in Section A, require candidates to draw on their knowledge of their chosen text, to consider the writer's use of language, form and structure and to provide relevant examples. In addition, candidates are asked to refer to context in this section. The Assessment Objectives assessed in Section B are:

AO1	Demonstrate a close knowledge and understanding of texts, maintaining a critical style and presenting an informed personal engagement.
AO2	Analyse the language, form and structure used by a writer to create meanings and effects.
AO4	Show understanding of the relationships between texts and the contexts in which they were written.

Candidates are advised to spend 45 minutes on each section. The total number of marks available for this paper is 60. Both sections carry 30 marks per question.

Introduction

The January 2022 series was successful. There were no errors in the paper and no erratum notices. It was pleasing to see the full range of achievement on this single tier paper covering the 9-1 grades and, once again, centres should be congratulated on preparing their candidates so well.

In Section A, the best answers used full and deep knowledge from across the chosen text to form relevant arguments fully focused on the question. In these answers, a broad balance between AO1 and AO2 demands was achieved, with candidates exploring well-selected techniques and their impact. Less successful responses tended to perform better on AO1, often giving just a light touch to AO2, or not considering AO2 at all.

Candidates at all levels of achievement performed best when they identified with the texts as drama rather than merely texts. This awareness and insight led to some effective and apposite comment on detail. Less successful answers tended to lack a valid structure, which led some to drift away from the focus of the question. Some also tended to lapse into narration of the plot, thereby limiting themselves to the lower reaches of the mark scheme. It is worth noting that narrative detail is a key descriptor of Level 2.

In Section B, the best answers used the question to build well-developed and focused answers that incorporated a balance of AO1, AO2 and AO4. Some insightful responses were seen that engaged fully with the question and provided detail from the text, chosen with discrimination to support arguments. As with Section A, the less successful answers tended to narrate events or describe characters, sometimes interspersing this with relevant argument.

In Section B, it is imperative candidates remember that marks for context, AO4, are awarded in this section. AO1, AO2 and AO4 are of equal value. The most effective answers integrated points on context throughout, often to develop points for AO1 and AO2. Candidates should try to avoid writing absolutely everything they know about the context of the text into their answers, but instead select appropriate, relevant detail.

In many cases, further consideration of AO2 would have helped candidates to have achieved the higher marks. The mark schemes for the question papers, available on the Pearson Edexcel website, provide comprehensive suggestions as to what candidates may choose to write about. These can be particularly helpful for candidates to use in preparation for the examination to think about the types of comments they might choose to make on language, form and structure, as well as context.

Finally, although there is no formal requirement for candidates to start their answers with an introduction and a conclusion, this can often help candidates to maintain a focus on the question. It can also help to spend a few minutes at the start of the examination to produce a plan. Not only can this help to ensure a focus on the question, but it can also help candidates to think of the range of ideas they would like to include in their answers, ensuring full coverage of all the assessment objectives assessed.

4ET1 02 Questions

In this section, a summary of candidate performance is provided for each question.

SECTION A - MODERN DRAMA

A View from the Bridge

Question 1: Explore the role of Alfieri in *A View from the Bridge*.

There were just six responses to this question. On the whole, the responses demonstrated secure knowledge and understanding of Alfieri's role in the play.

Points for AO1 tended to centre on Alfieri's perspective on the events of the play, his understanding of Eddie and the empathy he shows to Eddie's position, and how Alfieri tries to stop Marco from taking events into his own hands.

For AO2, comments centred on Alfieri's language when he warns Eddie of the consequences of his interference in the blossoming relationship between Catherine and Rodolpho, Alfieri's role as narrator being similar to that of a traditional Greek Chorus and the importance of Alfieri providing a short narration at the start of each scene.

As seen in previous series, the stronger responses used points for AO2 to develop points in relation to AO1. There was some evidence of imbalance in addressing the assessment objectives and candidates should be reminded that AO1 and AO2 are of equal weight in the mark scheme.

Question 2: Discuss the theme of anger in the play.

There were just three responses to this question. As with Question 1, there was much for candidates to be able to consider.

Points for AO1 covered Beatrice's growing anger at Eddie and his interest in Catherine, Beatrice's frustration at the distance in her relationship with Eddie, Eddie's anger towards other characters (particularly Beatrice, Catherine, Rodolpho, Marco and Alfieri) and the anger characters felt towards Eddie for reporting Marco and Rodolpho to the Immigration Bureau.

For AO2, comments tended to centre on the language of characters which shows their anger, with some more subtle examples provided, such as Beatrice's anger at Eddie's neglect of her. There was also some thoughtful analysis of Marco's anger at Eddie's actions because of the impact it would have on his family back in Italy: *'He killed my children!'*

An Inspector Calls

Question 3: Discuss the theme of blame in *An Inspector Calls*.

There were just a few responses to this question. The performance of this question was as intended and responses were typical of previous series.

As the play centres on the Inspector's questioning of the Birling family, uncovering how they were to blame for Eva's/Daisy's death, there was much for candidates to be able to consider.

Points centred on which characters are to blame for what happened to Eva/Daisy and which characters accept blame (contrasting Sheila's and Eric's attitudes to that of Mr and Mrs Birling and Gerald Croft, for example).

Candidates should be commended for avoiding merely feature spotting for AO2, and instead responses tended to consider the effects of the language, particularly the messages Priestley, through the Inspector, conveys to the audience regarding the need to accept blame and take responsibility for actions.

There were some comments regarding the context of the play. Candidates should be reminded that AO4 is not assessed in this section of the paper.

Question 4: 'Eric Birling and Gerald Croft are shown to be very different characters in the play.' How far do you agree with this statement?

There were just three responses to this question. As with Question 3, this appeared to be an accessible question.

Candidates commented on the descriptions of the physical appearance of both Gerald and Eric, Mr Birling's approval of Gerald but not of his own son, Gerald's and Eric's treatment of Eva/Daisy and their differing attitudes towards accepting responsibility.

Points for AO1 tended to be reasonably well developed with analysis of language, form and structure, with appropriate examples.

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time

Question 5: Discuss the importance of understanding the needs of others in *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time*.

There were no responses to this question.

Question 6: 'In the play, Judy Boone has her faults but is ultimately presented as a good mother to Christopher.' How far do you agree with this view?

There were no responses to this question.

Kindertransport

Question 7: Discuss how Faith is presented as being different from her mother, Eva/Evelyn, in *Kindertransport*.

There were no responses to this question.

Question 8: 'The end of the play helps to give the audience a sense of closure.' How far do you agree with the view that the ending of the play is successful?

There were no responses to this question.

Death and the King's Horseman

Question 9: 'The actions of the characters are a result of their strong sense of right and wrong.' Explore the theme of duty in *Death and the King's Horseman*.

There were no responses to this question.

Question 10: In what ways is the role of Iyaloja important in the play?

There were no responses to this question.

SECTION B - MODERN DRAMA

Romeo and Juliet

Question 11: Discuss the presentation of one character you sympathise with in the play.

There were six responses to this question. Two candidates chose Friar Lawrence as the character they sympathise with in the play and four candidates chose Juliet.

When discussing Friar Lawrence, comments included how Friar Lawrence acts with the intentions of bringing to an end the feud between the two families but ultimately causes the deaths of Romeo and Juliet, and how he shows remorse for his actions. AO4 comments focussed on the role of friars at the time the play was written.

With reference to Juliet, comments tended to centre on how Lord Capulet treats Juliet, how she is being forced to marry Paris and how, ultimately, the only way she can be with Romeo is by killing herself. AO2 points focussed on the language Juliet uses to express her love for Romeo and the tirade from her father when she disobeys him. AO4 comments tended to centre on the ideas at the time the play was written relating to marriage and how girls were typically expected to behave.

The stronger responses appropriately selected suitable points to sustain their arguments, with integrated analysis of language, form and structure and supporting, relevant points on context.

Question 12: Mercutio: 'O calm, dishonourable, vile submission!' Explore the theme of honour in *Romeo and Juliet*.

There were five responses to this question. This proved to be an accessible question with a range of points seen for AO1, including the defence of family honour in the ancient feud between the Capulets and Montagues, the honour shown by Tybalt to the Capulet family and the dishonour shown by Juliet to her father when she refuses to marry Paris. Points tended to be well developed and supported with appropriate quotations.

There were some good examples of candidates supporting points relating to AO1 and AO2 with relevant comment on context, such as duelling being used as a way of settling disputes concerning honour at the time the play was written and how it was expected the whole family would honour the head of the household.

Macbeth

Question 13: 'Even from the beginning of the play, it is clear that the unfolding events are unavoidable.' Discuss the significance of fate in *Macbeth*.

There were three responses to this question. There were no discernible difficulties with all three responses achieving a mark in mid-Level 4 and above.

Points centred on the Witches' prophecies, whether Macbeth and Lady Macbeth have any choice over their actions and the inevitability of Macbeth's fate.

Comments relating to AO2 were based on the language of the Witches' prophecies, Macbeth's growing belief in the prophecies as the play progresses and the significance of fate throughout the play.

For AO4, comments focussed on the belief in witches at the time the play was written and the Great Chain of Being.

The performance of this question was similar to previous series. Candidates approached this question with enthusiasm and attempted to address all three assessment objectives.

Question 14: Explore the character of Macduff in the play.

There were no responses to this question.

The Merchant of Venice

Question 15: Nerissa: 'They are as sick that surfeit with too much, as they that starve with nothing.' Explore the theme of greed in *The Merchant of Venice*.

There were no responses to this question.

Question 16: To what extent is Bassanio presented as a character who relies on others in the play?

There were no responses to this question.

Pride and Prejudice

Question 17: Discuss the significance of social class in *Pride and Prejudice*.

There was just one response to this question. The sole response seen showed perceptive knowledge and understanding of the significance of social class in the novel. It successfully integrated points relating to AO2 and AO4 to sustain the argument and was well-supported with quotations from the text.

Question 18: How does Austen present the relationship between Mrs Bennet and her daughters in the novel?

There were no responses to this question.

Great Expectations

Question 19: Mrs Joe: 'It's bad enough to be a blacksmith's wife (and him a Gargery)...' Discuss the importance of reputation in *Great Expectations*.

There were no responses to this question.

Question 20: How is the relationship between Pip and Herbert Pocket presented in the novel?

There were no responses to this question.

Question 21: Explore the significance of sin in *The Scarlet Letter*.

There were no responses to this question.

Question 22: 'Hester is presented as an admirable character in the novel.' How far do you agree with this view?

There were no responses to this question.

Top Tips

As a summary, here are some top tips for this paper:

- There is a choice of two questions for each text. Candidates are able to play to their strengths by selecting the question they feel most confident with.
- Candidates are advised to spend 45 minutes on each section.
- The indicative content in the mark scheme shows possible points candidates might make in their answer. However, these are just suggested points; any relevant ideas are rewarded.
- A brief introduction and conclusion can help to ensure that responses remain focused on the question.
- A brief plan at the start can help candidates to think of the range of points they would like to include in their essay.
- If there is a quotation given in the question, candidates can use this as stimulus for their answer (perhaps as a starting point).
- In Section A, both AO1 and AO2 are assessed.
- Remember, AO1 and AO2 are of equal value in Section A.
- Context (AO4) is not assessed in section A
- There are three parts to AO1:
 - o demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the text
 - o maintain a critical style
 - o present an informed critical style
- For AO1, candidates should show their knowledge and understanding of the text through the scope and depth of examples selected from across the text.
- As part of AO1, candidates are required to provide examples to support points. As an open book exam, this is likely to be quotations from the text. However, depending on the point being made, this could still be a paraphrase or a reference to a specific part of the play.
- Candidates are able to show personal engagement for AO1 by offering their own individual thoughts on relevant ideas.

- Quotations should be selected carefully, which fully support the points being made; precise quotations, such as a word or a phrase, are more likely to show the necessary discrimination in the selection of evidence.
- Responses which re-tell the story are typical of Level 2, where the key descriptor is 'largely narrative'.
- For AO2, candidates should not just consider language but also form and structure.
- Although the mark scheme does not specify the need to use literary terminology, this could well help candidates to focus on the need to explore language, form and structure for AO2.
- Form, for AO2, could include:
 - o the type of text
 - o the physical organisation of the text, including stage directions
 - o the genre
 - o use of prose / verse.
- More successful responses will intertwine the assessment objectives to fully develop ideas.
- Finding examples from across the text to support a point can help to develop ideas.
- The Point, Evidence, Explanation (PEE) approach can help candidates to achieve a mark at least in Level 3.
- Remember, in addition to AO1 and AO2, context (AO4) is assessed in Section B.
- For context (AO4), candidates could comment on a number of aspects, including:
 - o the author's life
 - o the historical setting, time and location
 - o social and cultural context
 - o the literary context
 - o how the text is received at different times
- Candidates should try to avoid providing a summary of what they know about the writer and try to select appropriate points for context which support the ideas in the main part of their essay.
- The most successful responses integrate references to context throughout, often using context to support and develop points for AO1 and AO2.