



A-level ENGLISH LITERATURE A 7712/2B

Paper 2B Texts in shared contexts: Modern times: Literature from
1945 to the present day

Mark scheme

June 2025

Version: 1.0 Final



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 Examiner.

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.

No student should be disadvantaged on the basis of their gender identity and/or how they refer to the gender identity of others in their exam responses.

A consistent use of 'they/them' as a singular and pronouns beyond 'she/her' or 'he/him' will be credited in exam responses in line with existing mark scheme criteria.

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

Copyright information

AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered schools/colleges for AQA are permitted to copy material from this booklet for their own internal use, with the following important exception: AQA cannot give permission to schools/colleges to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within the centre.

Copyright © 2025 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

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.

7712/2B Mark Scheme

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

The significance of open book (AS Paper 2 Section B, A-level Paper 2 Section A and the second part of Section B)

Examiners must understand that in marking an open book exam there are examining implications. Candidates have their texts in front of them, and they are expected to use them to focus on specific passages for detailed discussion. They will not have had to memorise quotations, so when quotations are used they should be accurate. Because candidates have their texts in the examination room, examiners need to be alert to possible malpractice. The texts should not be annotated, but if examiners suspect that they have been or that notes from texts have been copied, they must alert the malpractice team.

There are specific issues for AO2 – how meanings are shaped in texts. There is, with open book, the expectation that candidates can use the text they have in front of them to make specific and detailed reference to structural and organisational issues.

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 7) 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 candidates 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 band marks are attainable if candidates 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 candidates 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 are no right answers. Candidates' 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 candidate 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 8. The key words for the bands are important and are printed below.

MARK BAND DESCRIPTORS	
Band 5	perceptive/assured
Band 4	coherent/thorough
Band 3	straightforward/relevant
Band 2	simple/generalised
Band 1	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 specific sections

12. Examiners need to bear in mind the following key points when marking extract-based questions:
- has the candidate engaged in a relevant debate?
 - does the candidate have an overview of the extract(s)/text(s)?
 - has the candidate written about authorial method(s)?
 - has the candidate seen the significance of the extract(s)/text(s) in relation to the central historicist literary concept?
 - has the candidate quoted from the extract(s)/text(s) to support ideas?
 - the candidate's AO1 competence.

13. Examiners need to bear in mind the following key points when marking questions based on single texts and compared texts:
- has the candidate engaged in a relevant debate or constructed a relevant argument?
 - has the candidate referred to different parts of the extract(s)/text(s) to support their views?
 - has the candidate seen the significance of the extract(s)/text(s) in relation to the central historicist literary concept?
 - has the candidate referred to authorial methods?
 - the candidate's AO1 competence.
14. Examiners need to bear in mind the following key points when marking questions connecting two texts:
- has the candidate focused on the central historicist literary concept set up in the question and referred to two texts?
 - has the candidate engaged in a relevant debate or constructed a relevant argument around the two texts?
 - has the candidate considered the writers' authorial methods in the two texts?
 - has the candidate adhered to the rubric?
 - has the candidate given substantial coverage of two texts?
 - the candidate's AO1 competence.

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 candidate performance.
17. Please remember that scripts can go back to candidates, so although your audience is a senior examiner, you must express your views temperately.
18. Please use the e-Marker2 symbols provided as formative annotation, and a text box for a holistic summative comment.
19. Use the Model Marked Script(s) for guidance, along with the Standardisation scripts.

The Assessment Objectives and their significance

20. All questions are framed to test AOs 2, 3, 4 and 5, so if candidates answer the question, then they will be addressing the AOs. In marking questions, however, examiners must also take account of AO1, which tests more than technical accuracy.

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

Mark Scheme

It is important to remember that these students, in the main, are 18 years old so we are judging their skills at the end of Key Stage 5.

Weightings for each question are as follows:

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

Mark	AO	Typical features	How to arrive at mark
Band 5 Perceptive/Assured 21–25 marks ‘ Perception ’ is demonstrated when students are showing the depth of their understanding and responding sensitively to the texts and task. ‘ Assuredness ’ is shown when students write with confidence and conviction.	AO5	perceptive and confident engagement with the debate set up in the task	This band is characterised by perceptive and assured work which shows confidence, sharpness of mind and sophistication in relation to the task. At the top of the band students are consistently assured and will demonstrate sensitivity and perception 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 perception but with less consistency and evenness.
	AO4	perceptive exploration of connections across literary texts arising out of historicist study	
	AO3	- perceptive understanding of the significance of relevant contexts in relation to the task - assuredness in the connection between those contexts and the historicist literary concept studied	
	AO2	- perceptive understanding of authorial methods in relation to the task - assured engagement with how meanings are shaped by the methods used	
	AO1	- perceptive, assured and sophisticated argument in relation to the task - assured use of literary critical concepts and terminology; mature and impressive expression	

MARK SCHEME – A-LEVEL ENGLISH LITERATURE A – 7712/2B – JUNE 2025

Band 4 Coherent/Thorough 16–20 marks ‘Coherence’ 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. ‘Thoroughness’ is shown when students write carefully, precisely and accurately.	AO5	thorough engagement with the debate set up in the task	This band is characterised by coherent and thorough 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 coherent and thorough 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 coherence and accuracy.
	AO4	logical and consistent exploration of connections across literary texts arising out of historicist study	
	AO3	- thorough understanding of the significance of relevant contexts in relation to the task - coherence in the connection between those contexts and the historicist literary concept studied	
	AO2	- thorough understanding of authorial methods in relation to the task - thorough engagement with how meanings are shaped by the methods used	
	AO1	- logical, thorough and coherent argument in relation to the task where ideas are debated in depth - appropriate use of literary critical concepts and terminology; precise and accurate expression	
Band 3 Straightforward/ Relevant 11–15 marks ‘Straightforward’ work is shown when students make their ideas in relation to the task clearly known. ‘Relevant’ work is shown when students are focused on the task and use detail in an appropriate and supportive way.	AO5	straightforward engagement with the debate set up in the task	This band is characterised by straightforward and relevant work where the student’s response to the task is clear and intelligible. At the top of the band students will demonstrate consistent straightforward understanding in the course of their argument. Ideas will be developed relevantly. At the bottom of the band there will be flashes of relevant understanding with evidence of straightforward thinking.
	AO4	explores connections across literary texts arising out of historicist study in a straightforward way	
	AO3	- straightforward understanding of the significance of relevant contexts in relation to the task - relevant connections between those contexts and the historicist literary concept studied	
	AO2	- straightforward understanding of authorial methods in relation to the task - relevant engagement with how meanings are shaped by the methods used	
	AO1	- sensibly ordered ideas in a relevant argument in relation to the task - some use of literary critical concepts and terminology which are mainly appropriate; straightforward and clear expression	

MARK SCHEME – A-LEVEL ENGLISH LITERATURE A – 7712/2B – JUNE 2025

Band 2 Simple/Generalised 6–10 marks 'Simple' work is shown when students write in an unelaborated and basic way in relation to the task. 'Generalised' work is shown when students write without regard to particular details.	AO5	• simple and generalised response to the debate set up in the task	This band is characterised by simple and generalised work which is mainly linked to the task. At the top of the band students will demonstrate a basic generalised understanding in the course of their answer. Ideas will be developed in a simple way. At the bottom of the band there will be inconsistency, but the beginnings of a simple and generalised understanding.
	AO4	• simple exploration of connections across literary texts arising out of historicist study	
	AO3	• simple understanding of the significance of relevant contexts in relation to the task • generalised connections between those contexts and the historicist literary concept studied	
	AO2	• simple understanding of authorial methods in relation to the task • generalised engagement with how meanings are shaped by the methods used	
	AO1	• a simple structure to the argument which may not be consistent but which does relate to the task • generalised use of literary critical concepts and terminology; simple expression	

MARK SCHEME – A-LEVEL ENGLISH LITERATURE A – 7712/2B – JUNE 2025

Band 1 Largely irrelevant/largely misunderstood/largely inaccurate 1–5 marks 'Largely irrelevant' work is shown when students write in an unclear way with only occasional reference to what is required by the question. 'Largely misunderstood' and 'largely inaccurate' work is shown when knowledge of the text is insecure, hazy and often wrong.		• some vague points in relation to the task and some ideas about task and text(s) • the writing is likely to be unclear and incorrect; if it is accurate the content will be irrelevant • 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 historicist study; little sense of an argument in relation to the task	This band is characterised by work which is largely irrelevant and largely misunderstood and largely inaccurate, and so unlikely to be addressing the AOs in a relevant way. 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. At the bottom of the band there will be no connection with the task; the writing will be hard to follow and irrelevant.
0 marks		No marks for response when nothing is written or where response has no connection to the text(s) or task.	

Option 1**Section A: Poetry Set Text****Question 01*****Feminine Gospels* – Carol Ann Duffy**

Examine the significance of the collection's title, *Feminine Gospels*.

You must write about **at least two** poems in your answer.

[25 marks]

Possible content:

Please refer to pages 4 to 7.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

Students might consider:

- the implications of the word 'feminine', in terms of the collection's focus on sharing women's stories, possibly as a reaction to women being traditionally side-lined by men's actions and decisions throughout history, eg 'Loud', 'Tall', 'Beautiful', 'Work' and 'History'
- the implications of the word 'gospels' in terms of its promising a new kind of teaching or revelation, eg as shown in poems that present a revisionist retelling of the biblical gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John
- Duffy's decision to dedicate the collection to her four brothers, as listeners rather than authors of these new 'gospels' which tell a new kind of 'gospel truth'
- that the word 'gospels' is a literal translation of the Greek word meaning 'the good news', and was used by the New Testament evangelists to indicate news of salvation or liberation; this may be seen in poems that celebrate women's increasing power and status, eg 'TLOSGH'
- that Duffy is proposing a new way of approaching life, just as the writers of the original gospels proposed following a new road that departed from established tradition
- poems that contain explicitly religious elements, eg 'The Virgin's Memo'
- the fact that the collection is headed by 'The Long Queen', who presides over a matriarchy and a powerful 'feminine' collective
- the collection's concerns with issues that may be seen as typically 'feminine' in scope, eg 'The Diet' and 'The Woman Who Shopped'
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

Focus might be on:

- poetic representations of gender, power and patriarchy in modern literature
- etc.

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

Focus might be on:

- how attitudes to gender, power and patriarchy are expressed within this poetry collection and how this reflects changing attitudes over time
- the ways in which poetic methods are an integral part of strengthening the collection's presentation of gender, power and patriarchy
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

Focus might be on:

- aspects of poetic form and genre
- aspects of structure, eg use of stanzas as well as the overall organisation of the collection and the links and connections that may be made between the sections
- aspects of language, eg rhyme, rhythm and imagery
- etc.

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

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

Accept any valid interpretations, any valid comments on contexts and any valid discussion of authorial methods.

Question 02***Feminine Gospels* – Carol Ann Duffy**

‘A collection dominated by grief and mourning.’

Examine this view.

You must write about **at least two** poems in your answer.

[25 marks]

Possible content:

Please refer to pages 4 to 7.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

Students might consider:

- ideas about grief and ideas about mourning equally, or choose to prioritise either aspect of the task focus
- that grief and/or mourning are seen in response to injustice, oppression and/or suffering caused by a variety of social and cultural factors in poems such as ‘Sub’, ‘White Writing’, ‘Anon’ and parts of ‘Beautiful’
- that grief and/or mourning are shown in poems about personal loss and bereavement, eg the elegies ‘Wish’ and ‘Death and the Moon’
- that grief and/or mourning may be seen in poems that reflect attitudes of stoic endurance in the face of suffering, eg ‘History’, ‘Work’, ‘Tall’ and ‘Loud’
- that alternatively, there is also much to celebrate and enjoy within the collection, such as the female community in ‘The Long Queen’, the rebellion of the girls and staff in ‘TLOSGH’, the mother and child bond in ‘The Cord’ or the vision of a woman succeeding in a ‘man’s world’ in ‘Sub’
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

Focus might be on:

- poetic representations of grief and/or mourning in modern literature
- etc.

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

Focus might be on:

- how attitudes to grief and/or mourning are expressed within this poetry collection and how this reflects changing attitudes over time
- the ways in which poetic methods are an integral part of strengthening the collection’s presentation of grief and/or mourning
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

Focus might be on:

- aspects of poetic form and genre
- aspects of structure, eg use of stanzas
- aspects of language, eg rhyme, rhythm, imagery
- the overall organisational structure and coherence of the collection and the links and connections that may be made between the sections
- methods that might affect the ways in which grief and/or mourning are presented within the collection
- etc.

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

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

Accept any valid interpretations, any valid comments on contexts and any valid discussion of authorial methods.

Question 03***Skirrid Hill* – Owen Sheers**

Examine the significance of Sheers' representation of Wales in *Skirrid Hill*.

You must write about **at least two** poems in your answer.

[25 marks]

Possible content:

Please refer to pages 4 to 7.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

Students might consider:

- poems that offer a positive view of aspects of Welsh nationhood, landscape, culture and/or traditions such as 'Y Gaer', 'The Hill Fort', 'Border Country', 'Skirrid Hill' and 'Skirrid Fawr'
- poems that may be seen to offer an ambivalent view of aspects of Welsh nationhood, landscape, culture and/or traditions, and indeed reflect possible difficulties, changes and challenges, such as 'Flag', 'Joseph Jones', 'The Steelworks', and 'Farrier'
- representations of Wales past and present; issues relating to Sheers' own overseas birth (in Fiji) and sense of Welshness and personal identity
- the extent to which representations of Wales and Welsh nationhood, landscape, culture and/or traditions may be connected to the major themes and ideas presented across the collection as a whole
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

Focus might be on:

- poetic representations of a specific nation, location, landscape and/or its culture and traditions in modern literature
- etc.

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

Focus might be on:

- how attitudes to Wales and its nationhood, landscape, culture and/or traditions are expressed within this poetry collection and how this reflects changing attitudes over time
- ideas about Wales and its nationhood, landscape, culture and/or traditions as expressed within this poetry collection, and how this reflects changing attitudes over time
- the ways in which poetic methods are integral to the collection's presentation of Wales, its nationhood, landscape, culture and/or traditions
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

Focus might be on:

- aspects of poetic form and genre
- aspects of structure, eg use of stanzas, and also the collection's overall organisational structure and coherence, and the links and connections that may be made between individual poems
- aspects of language, eg rhyme, rhythm, imagery
- methods that might affect the ways in which Wales, its nationhood, landscape, culture and/or traditions are presented within the collection
- etc.

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

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

Accept any valid interpretations, any valid comments on contexts and any valid discussion of authorial methods.

Question 04***Skirrid Hill* – Owen Sheers**

Examine the significance of time in the collection.

You must write about **at least two** poems in your answer.

[25 marks]

Possible content:

Please refer to pages 4 to 7.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

Students might consider:

- poems within the collection that present ideas about the past, present and future, or continuity and change, or time passing, or social, cultural and historical change, eg 'Calendar', 'History', 'Y Gaer', 'The Hill Fort', 'Farrier', 'Border Country', 'Skirrid Hill' and 'The Steelworks'
- time as a more personal concept that can be measured in terms of individual human lives, or the ageing process, such as 'L.A. Evening', 'Inheritance', 'Amazon', 'On Going' and 'The Wake'
- time as a concept linked to the stages of developing human relationships, eg 'Winter Swans' or 'Inheritance'
- the extent to which ideas about time may be linked to the major themes and ideas presented across the collection as a whole
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

Focus might be on:

- poetic representations of time in modern literature
- poetic representations of the past, present and future, and the passing of time, in modern literature
- etc.

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

Focus might be on:

- how attitudes to time are expressed within this poetry collection and how this reflects changing attitudes over time
- ideas about time as expressed within this poetry collection and how this reflects changing attitudes over time
- the ways in which poetic methods are integral to the presentation of time in the collection
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

Focus might be on:

- aspects of poetic form and genre
- aspects of structure, eg use of stanzas, and also the collection's overall organisational structure and coherence, and the links and connections that may be made across and between individual poems
- aspects of language, eg rhyme, rhythm, imagery
- methods that might affect the ways in which time is presented within the collection
- etc.

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

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

Accept any valid interpretations, any valid comments on contexts and any valid discussion of authorial methods.

Option 1**Section B: Drama and Prose Contextual Linking****Question 05**

Explore the significance of the struggle for identity in this extract.

Remember to include in your answer relevant detailed analysis of the ways that Boyd shapes meanings.

[25 marks]

Possible content:

Please refer to pages 4 to 7.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

Focus might be on:

- the World War II time period – the action taking place on the Home Front in London at the height of the Blitz, just before the beginning of the Modern Times synchronic time period
- the fact that Eva's wartime experience fighting for the freedom of others has now become a desperate personal struggle to assume a new identity
- Eva's struggle for personal freedom and a new identity as analogous to that of the countries attempting to achieve autonomy and self-determination on a global scale; possibly the idea that it is easier to focus on the fate of one individual rather than millions
- issues of gender, power, nationality and class, given Eva's original Russian birth and background, and her assumption of the stolen identity of an English girl; the contrasting names 'Eva Delectorskaya' and 'Sally Fairchild' may be seen as significant, with Sally's name perhaps seen as suggesting a fresh start; reference may be made to the future Cold War, which will further separate Eva from her country of origin
- the difficult moral choices Eva has to make in order to achieve her personal freedom and a new identity, eg lying to her landlady Mrs Dangerfield and the police; stealing the identity of a dead girl tragically killed along with the rest of her family; apparently planning to pick up a man in a club who may be able to protect her
- how Boyd uses Eva's theft of Sally's identity to suggest how unstable and at risk individual freedom can be within society as a whole; the fact that Eva willingly inflicts a minor injury on herself in order to pass as having survived the air raid that in fact killed Sally Fairchild and her entire family; the idea that freedom for some may be based upon disaster for others
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

Focus might be on:

- ideas about representations of the struggle for identity as seen in modern literature
- etc.

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

Focus might be on:

- ideas about how representations of the struggle for identity may be seen to have an impact upon the ways in which issues key to the context of Modern Times such as class, gender, race, culture and national identity are received and understood
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

Focus might be on:

- Boyd's decision to focalise the events through Eva's point of view while retaining a third-person stance
- elements typical of the genre of the spy thriller or escape/adventure story
- the cool factual tone used to describe horrific and tragic events; the listing of the five dead Fairchilds
- use of verisimilitude to add a sense of authenticity; use of specific numbers of the dead and missing; use of specific locations eg Deptford, Battersea, Rotherhithe, Victoria Station, Whitehall, the Chelsea Arts Club etc
- aspects of Boyd's structure, eg Eva's various journeys to establish her new identity
- the garish description of the bombed-out ruins of Carlisle House; the 'fuming moonscape', 'hills' and 'teetering cliffs' of dereliction
- the symbolism of Eva burning her passport in order to assume a new identity; the symbolic difference between her old and assumed names
- The persistent threat of Romer and the hints of their former close relationship; his 'perverse pleasure in her skills at evasion'
- the way in which Eva behaves in stereotypically 'feminine' ways such as weeping and feigning concussion in order to elicit sympathy; her cleverness in fooling the authorities – the police, the Home Office etc
- how Boyd's word choices and syntax within the narrative description suggests the 1940s wartime context and setting – eg the 'eligible' young men she hunts down at various night clubs
- etc.

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

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

Accept any valid interpretations, any valid comments on contexts and any valid discussion of authorial methods.

Question 06

Compare the significance of the struggle for identity in **two** other texts you have studied.

Remember to include in your answer reference to how meanings are shaped in the texts you are comparing.

You must use **one** drama text and **one** prose text in your response.

[25 marks]

Possible content:

Please refer to pages 4 to 7.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

Focus might be on:

- interpretations of the significance of the struggle for identity as expressed in their two texts
- the extent to which the contrasting genres of the two texts affect the ways in which the struggle for identity are presented
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

Focus might be on:

- connections of similarity and/or difference at the level of subject matter/genre/attitudes and/or methods
- etc.

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

Focus might be on:

- differing representations of the struggle for identity and its possible effects and impact
- the psychological effects of the struggle for identity
- an analytical comparison of characters who respond to the struggle for identity in various ways
- how the struggle for identity may be viewed differently over time
- how the theme of the struggle for identity contributes to a text or texts as a whole
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

Focus might be on:

- methods of presenting and explaining the reasons for the prevalence and significance of the theme of the struggle for identity in modern literature
- possible purposes and effects of the presentation of the struggle for identity
- prose methods such as: narrative structure; point of view; chronology; use of dialogue; indirect speech; development of settings; ways of influencing the readers' response to character and incident
- dramatic methods such as: explicit structural devices; dramatic irony; stage directions; indirect ways of communicating the writers' messages and ideas; naturalistic, non-naturalistic, expressionist and other styles of representing character, incident and narrative
- poetic methods such as: types of verse form; explicit and implicit structural features; use of tropes for rhetorical effect; use of aural devices for rhetorical effect; elliptical use of language
- etc.

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

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

Accept any valid interpretations, any valid comments on contexts and any valid discussion of authorial methods.

Option 2**Section A: Drama Set Text****Question 07*****A Streetcar Named Desire* – Tennessee Williams**

Examine the significance of the play's title, *A Streetcar Named Desire*.

[25 marks]

Possible content:

Please refer to pages 4 to 7.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

Students might consider:

- how Williams uses the vibrant New Orleans setting to illustrate aspects of the changing social and cultural values of post-war America, with the streetcar snaking its way through the very different areas of the city
- ideas about travel, destinations and the symbolism of ending up on the wrong side of the tracks – Blanche is out of place in the Quarter
- how the route and tram stops along the real-life New Orleans 'Desire' tramline exemplify Blanche's tragic journey: along the way she has to spend time in 'Elysian Fields', but the stop at the end of the line is 'Cemeteries', which may represent her living death in the asylum
- the symbolism of the 'rattle-trap streetcar' that 'bangs up and down' the streets of the Quarter, as ridden by both Blanche and Stella
- that both Blanche and Stella use the metaphor of the streetcar explicitly when talking to each other in Scene IV; Stella is glad to ride the 'streetcar' of desire with Stanley, but Blanche acknowledges desire as the source of all her troubles: 'it brought me here, where I'm not wanted, and where I'm ashamed to be'
- the way in which the title signals Williams' presentation of desire as a motivating force among all three of the major characters in a notably frank and modern way for the late 1940s context of production
- the tragic genre
- the possible impact of particular production(s) on the interpretation of the question
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

Focus might be on:

- dramatic representations of aspects of desire, class and culture as seen in modern literature
- etc.

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

Focus might be on:

- how the social, cultural and historical setting of the text is reflected in the play's title
- the extent to which the title is embedded in the play's specific contemporary context of production, and how responses to the text then and now can reflect changing attitudes over time
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

Focus might be on:

- aspects of dramatic form, eg melodrama, tragedy
- non-linear structure, flashbacks
- use of black comedy, non-naturalistic effects, music, sound, lighting
- dialogue and action and other dramatic methods, eg physical and verbal violence
- etc.

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

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

Accept any valid interpretations, any valid comments on contexts and any valid discussion of authorial methods.

Question 08**A Streetcar Named Desire – Tennessee Williams**

'I am the king around here, so don't forget it,' Stanley declares to Stella and Blanche.

Examine the view that Williams presents Stanley's confidence and self-belief as admirable.

[25 marks]

Possible content:

Please refer to pages 4 to 7.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

Students might consider:

- ideas about confidence and ideas about self-belief equally, or choose to prioritise either aspect of the task focus
- that attitudes towards Stanley may include both those of other characters within the play, and those of various audiences outside it
- that Stanley's confidence, exuberance and 'animal joy' in life is presented as attracting others to him, not only Stella, but also Mitch and his other friends
- how Williams uses Stanley to illustrate the changing society and values of America and the American South just after World War II and the significance of his role as a returning war hero aspiring to the American Dream
- Stanley's great confidence in the USA's future, linked to self-belief generated by being 'born and raised in the greatest country on earth and proud as hell of it'
- that Stanley is destined to achieve the consumerist American Dream, unlike any of the other male characters in the play – as Stella notes, 'Stanley's the only one of his crowd who will get anywhere'
- the mutual passion of Stanley and Stella; his delighted pride in becoming a father
- alternatively, the focus may be on Stanley's cruelty, cunning, insensitivity and violence towards his pregnant wife and vulnerable sister-in-law
- Stanley's bullying macho 'alpha-male' dominance of his male friends, especially Mitch
- Stanley's role as 'captain of the bowling team' and drunken behaviour during the poker games
- that Stanley's references to Louisiana's use of the 'Napoleonic Code' and the words of Louisiana demagogue Huey P. Long, together with his frequent attempts throughout the play to dominate and control those around him, make his behaviour more despicable than admirable
- that Stanley's sexual assault on Blanche is an appalling act that makes it impossible to admire any aspect of his behaviour
- Stanley's dramatic positioning as the antagonist to Blanche
- the tragic genre
- the possible impact of particular production(s) on the interpretation of the question
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

Focus might be on:

- dramatic representations of masculinity, class and culture in modern literature
- dramatic representations of the American Dream in modern literature
- etc.

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

Focus might be on:

- how Williams' presentation of masculinity, class and culture, and the American Dream are embedded in the play's specific contemporary context of production, and how responses to the text then and now can reflect changing attitudes over time
- the ways in which dramatic methods are an integral part of strengthening the text's evocation of these elements
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

Focus might be on:

- aspects of dramatic form, eg melodrama, tragedy
- non-linear structure, flashbacks
- use of black comedy, non-naturalistic effects, music, sound, lighting
- dialogue and action and other dramatic methods, eg physical and verbal violence
- etc.

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

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

Accept any valid interpretations, any valid comments on contexts and any valid discussion of authorial methods.

Question 09***Top Girls* – Caryl Churchill**

Examine the significance of the relationship between Marlene, Joyce and Angie.

[25 marks]

Possible content:

Please refer to pages 4 to 7.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

Students might consider:

- Churchill's use of Angie (Marlene's abandoned daughter, who is raised by Marlene's sister Joyce) to give a direct human focus to the warring sisters' relationship; she is damaged by her upbringing and tells Kit that she wants to 'kill her mother'
- how Angie's apparent limitations relate to her disadvantaged socio-economic status, and illustrate how far Marlene has moved away from her working-class family background
- the impact of Marlene's harsh judgement of Angie as incapable of making her way out of poverty due to her lack of intelligence
- how Angie's relationship with Joyce – arguably leading to the loss of Joyce's own child – is essential to the message of the play, given that the two sisters symbolise the great culture wars debate of the 1980s, with Marlene espousing classically Thatcherite views about the primacy of the individual, and Joyce taking a socialist perspective that defends the traditional working class and the need to help the vulnerable
- that Churchill presents Marlene's rise to the top as entailing the sacrifice of her family relationships with Angie and Joyce, who may be seen to represent the working-class culture she deliberately chooses to reject
- the significance of Churchill's decision to give Angie, Marlene's abandoned daughter, the last line of the play, 'Frightening'
- the possible impact of particular production(s) on the interpretation of the question
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

Focus might be on:

- dramatic representations of female relationships as seen in modern literature
- dramatic representations of family relationships in modern literature
- dramatic representations of gender, power, class and culture as seen in modern literature
- dramatic representations of the relationship between the individual and wider society as a whole in modern literature
- etc.

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

Focus might be on:

- how these female characters are embedded within their respective social, historical and cultural contexts as well as that of the 1980s, when the play was written
- how responses to the play when it was written and now can reflect changing attitudes over time
- the ways in which dramatic methods are integral to the play's presentation of these female characters
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

Focus might be on:

- aspects of dramatic form
- non-linear structure, flashbacks
- use of black comedy, non-naturalistic effects, music, sound, lighting
- dialogue and action
- ironic/satiric methods
- use of characters as symbols of larger ideas or abstract concepts
- other possible stage effects and interpretations
- etc.

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

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

Accept any valid interpretations, any valid comments on contexts and any valid discussion of authorial methods.

Question 10***Top Girls* – Caryl Churchill**

Examine the significance of marriage in *Top Girls*.

[25 marks]

Possible content:

Please refer to pages 4 to 7.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

Students might consider:

- changing attitudes towards marriage within the social, cultural context of the 1980s; the rise of feminism and Thatcherism
- Marlene's belief that being a single 'career woman' offers her the chance for a far more fulfilling, challenging and financially secure life than that she might have had as a married wife and mother; her belief that marriage curtails women's freedom and limits their career progression
- the interplay between marriage and the world of work – eg the marriage between Mrs Kidd and the unseen Howard, and Mrs Kidd's belief that Howard will be emasculated by having to answer to Marlene at work
- the fact that Janine's engagement is seen by the agency as a possible block to her career advancement
- the descriptions of Lady Nijo's marriage and Griselda's marriage; similarities and differences in the marriages of the dinner party guests and those of Marlene and Joyce's parents and Joyce herself
- the possible impact of particular production(s) on the interpretation of the question
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

Focus might be on:

- dramatic representations of marriage as seen in modern literature
- dramatic representations of gender, power, class and culture as seen in modern literature
- dramatic representations of the relationship between the individual and wider society as a whole in modern literature
- etc.

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

Focus might be on:

- how attitudes to marriage in the play as a whole are embedded within their respective social, historical and cultural contexts as well as that of the 1980s, when the play was written
- how responses to the play when it was written and now can reflect changing attitudes over time
- the ways in which dramatic methods are integral to the play's presentation of marriage
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

Focus might be on:

- aspects of dramatic form
- non-linear structure, flashbacks
- use of black comedy, non-naturalistic effects, music, sound, lighting
- dialogue and action
- ironic/satiric methods
- use of characters as symbols of larger ideas or abstract concepts
- other possible stage effects and interpretations
- etc.

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

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

Accept any valid interpretations, any valid comments on contexts and any valid discussion of authorial methods.

Option 2**Section B: Prose and Poetry Contextual Linking****Question 11**

Explore the significance of the struggle for identity in this extract.

Remember to include in your answer relevant detailed analysis of the ways that Boyd shapes meanings.

[25 marks]

Possible content:

Please refer to pages 4 to 7.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

Focus might be on:

- the World War II time period – the action taking place on the Home Front in London at the height of the Blitz, just before the beginning of the Modern Times synchronic time period
- the fact that Eva's wartime experience fighting for the freedom of others has now become a desperate personal struggle to assume a new identity
- Eva's struggle for personal freedom and a new identity as analogous to that of the countries attempting to achieve autonomy and self-determination on a global scale; possibly the idea that it is easier to focus on the fate of one individual rather than millions
- issues of gender, power, nationality and class, given Eva's original Russian birth and background, and her assumption of the stolen identity of an English girl; the contrasting names 'Eva Delectorskaya' and 'Sally Fairchild' may be seen as significant, with Sally's name perhaps seen as suggesting a fresh start; reference may be made to the future Cold War, which will further separate Eva from her country of origin
- the difficult moral choices Eva has to make in order to achieve her personal freedom and a new identity, eg lying to her landlady Mrs Dangerfield and the police; stealing the identity of a dead girl tragically killed along with the rest of her family; apparently planning to pick up a man in a club who may be able to protect her
- how Boyd uses Eva's theft of Sally's identity to suggest how unstable and at risk individual freedom can be within society as a whole; the fact that Eva willingly inflicts a minor injury on herself in order to pass as having survived the air raid that in fact killed Sally Fairchild and her entire family; the idea that freedom for some may be based upon disaster for others
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

Focus might be on:

- ideas about representations of the struggle for identity as seen in modern literature
- etc.

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

Focus might be on:

- ideas about how representations of the struggle for identity may be seen to have an impact upon the ways in which issues key to the context of Modern Times such as class, gender, race, culture and national identity are received and understood
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

Focus might be on:

- Boyd's decision to focalise the events through Eva's point of view while retaining a third-person stance
- elements typical of the genre of the spy thriller or escape/adventure story
- the cool factual tone used to describe horrific and tragic events; the listing of the five dead Fairchilds
- use of verisimilitude to add a sense of authenticity; use of specific numbers of the dead and missing; use of specific locations eg Deptford, Battersea, Rotherhithe, Victoria Station, Whitehall, the Chelsea Arts Club etc
- aspects of Boyd's structure, eg Eva's various journeys to establish her new identity
- the garish description of the bombed-out ruins of Carlisle House; the 'fuming moonscape', 'hills' and 'teetering cliffs' of dereliction
- the symbolism of Eva burning her passport in order to assume a new identity; the symbolic difference between her old and assumed names
- The persistent threat of Romer and the hints of their former close relationship; his 'perverse pleasure in her skills at evasion'
- the way in which Eva behaves in stereotypically 'feminine' ways such as weeping and feigning concussion in order to elicit sympathy; her cleverness in fooling the authorities – the police, the Home Office etc
- how Boyd's word choices and syntax within the narrative description suggests the 1940s wartime context and setting – eg the 'eligible' young men she hunts down at various night clubs
- etc.

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

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

Accept any valid interpretations, any valid comments on contexts and any valid discussion of authorial methods.

Question 12

Compare the significance of the struggle for identity in **two** other texts you have studied.

Remember to include in your answer reference to how meanings are shaped in the texts you are comparing.

You must use **one** prose text and **one** poetry text in your response, at least **one** of which must be a text written post-2000.

You must write about **at least two** poems.

[25 marks]

Possible content:

Please refer to pages 4 to 7.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

Focus might be on:

- interpretations of the significance of the struggle for identity as expressed in their two texts
- the extent to which the contrasting genres of the two texts affect the ways in which the struggle for identity are presented
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

Focus might be on:

- connections of similarity and/or difference at the level of subject matter/genre/attitudes and/or methods
- etc.

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

Focus might be on:

- differing representations of the struggle for identity and its possible effects and impact
- the psychological effects of the struggle for identity
- an analytical comparison of characters who respond to the struggle for identity in various ways
- how the struggle for identity may be viewed differently over time
- how the theme of the struggle for identity contributes to a text or texts as a whole
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

Focus might be on:

- methods of presenting and explaining the reasons for the prevalence and significance of the theme of the struggle for identity in modern literature
- possible purposes and effects of the presentation of the struggle for identity
- prose methods such as: narrative structure; point of view; chronology; use of dialogue; indirect speech; development of settings; ways of influencing the readers' response to character and incident
- dramatic methods such as: explicit structural devices; dramatic irony; stage directions; indirect ways of communicating the writers' messages and ideas; naturalistic, non-naturalistic, expressionist and other styles of representing character, incident and narrative
- poetic methods such as: types of verse form; explicit and implicit structural features; use of tropes for rhetorical effect; use of aural devices for rhetorical effect; elliptical use of language
- etc.

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

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

Accept any valid interpretations, any valid comments on contexts and any valid discussion of authorial methods.

Option 3**Section A: Prose Set Text****Question 13*****Waterland* – Graham Swift**

Examine the significance of the relationship between Tom and Mary Crick.

[25 marks]

Possible content:

Please refer to pages 4 to 7.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

Students might consider:

- Swift's presentation of Tom and Mary Crick as childhood sweethearts in the past, and the centrality of their relationship to the 1980s storyline
- the sadness of Tom and Mary living with the consequences of their past actions; the significance of Mary's infertility being the result of an abortion as a 15-year-old girl
- their present tragedy having been caused by past events – the adolescent couple's sexual relationship ruins their lives as Mary's attempt to steal a baby is seen by Tom as rooted in their shared past and fall from grace
- Tom's attempts to understand how they have ended up as such broken, sad people; their attempts to paper over their empty lives by resorting to storytelling and fantasy worlds
- Swift's presentation of Mary as filtered through Tom's narrative as a history teacher; Tom's likening her to a historical character from the French Revolution in having 'committed a revolutionary act' (stealing a baby)
- the irony of Mary turning to religion again as once she tried to escape her strict father's oppressive version of Christianity; the ironic symbolism of her bearing the name of the Virgin Mary, mother of God
- Mary's return to the religious teaching of her strict father, and her belief that the stolen baby is a gift from God
- Tom's 'betrayal' of Mary and his subsequent grief over her breakdown and committal to a mental health facility
- that Tom may be seen as having 'imprisoned' Mary for her actions, just as her father once did after discovering her sexual relationship with Tom
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

Focus might be on:

- prose representations of love and marriage in modern literature
- prose representations of gender and power in modern literature
- prose representations of mental illness in modern literature
- etc.

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

Focus might be on:

- how the importance of the relationship between Tom and Mary Crick within the novel is embedded within the specific social, historical and cultural contexts of both the 1940s and the 1980s, and how responses to their relationship might suggest changing responses over time
- the ways in which narrative methods are integral to the novel's presentation of the relationship between Tom and Mary Crick
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

Focus might be on:

- aspects of narrative form and genre, especially the ways in which Swift has structured the text as a postmodern metafiction
- aspects of structure, eg the ways in which the broader patterns of history and the history of the Crick family are entwined within the narrative
- language effects eg dialogue and description
- how the retrospective and non-linear narrative may be seen to shape the reader's response in relation to the question
- etc.

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

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

Accept any valid interpretations, any valid comments on contexts and any valid discussion of authorial methods.

Question 14***Waterland* – Graham Swift**

Examine the significance of teachers and teaching in *Waterland*.

[25 marks]

Possible content:

Please refer to pages 4 to 7.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

Students might consider:

- ideas about teachers and ideas about teaching equally, or choose to prioritise either aspect of the task focus
- various types of teaching and learning activities portrayed within the text
- characters who impart different kinds of knowledge and understanding, and may therefore be seen as 'teachers', eg Martha Clay and Mary Metcalf
- the role of Henry Crick, and his 'education' of his two sons, Tom and Dick; other fathers who may be seen to 'teach' lessons
- ideas about 'coming of age' and the loss of innocence, linked to the ways in which some characters acquire an 'education' in terms of sexual, emotional or psychological knowledge and/or awareness
- the relationship between history teacher Tom Crick and his A-level History class, which moves away from being taught an official curriculum subject by a practising teacher
- the role of the A-level History students as Tom Crick's narratees; the class's response when Tom abandons the official A-level syllabus to discuss other types of 'history'
- Price's belief that Tom's lessons about the past are a way of avoiding the contemporary threat of nuclear war in the early 1980s, and his rejection of the official curriculum in favour of forming a 'Holocaust Club'
- that Price's explanation of the Holocaust Club to Tom reverses their student-teacher dynamic
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

Focus might be on:

- prose representations of teachers, teaching, learning and education in modern literature
- etc.

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

Focus might be on:

- how the importance of teachers, teaching, learning and education within the novel is embedded within the specific social, historical and cultural contexts of both the 1940s and the 1980s and how responses to him might suggest changing responses over time
- the ways in which narrative methods are integral to the novel's presentation of teachers, teaching, learning and education
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

Focus might be on:

- aspects of narrative form and genre, especially the ways in which Swift has structured the text as a postmodern metafiction
- aspects of structure, eg the ways in past and present are entwined within the narrative
- language effects eg dialogue and description
- how the retrospective and non-linear narrative may be seen to shape the reader's response in relation to the question
- etc.

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

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

Accept any valid interpretations, any valid comments on contexts and any valid discussion of authorial methods.

Question 15***The Handmaid's Tale* – Margaret Atwood**

Examine the significance of the novel's title, *The Handmaid's Tale*.

[25 marks]

Possible content:

Please refer to pages 4 to 7.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

Focus might be on:

- the idea of a 'tale' being a specific kind of oral narrative often associated with women, and containing ideas about fairy tales and old wives' tales
- that as the handmaids are forbidden to read and write, and Offred is in fact recording her memories and impressions of Gilead onto a batch of old cassette tapes, this is an oral narrative in the female tradition
- that storytelling and the power of stories is a major theme within the text
- the function of the 'Historical Notes' as a postscript to Offred's narrative; the explanation of the Gileadean system and the reconstruction of Offred's story by Professor Pieixoto
- the impact of Pieixoto's revelation that he collated and edited Offred's story, and then named it 'The Handmaid's Tale' in homage to Chaucer
- the importance of the epigraph taken from the *Book of Genesis* which details the relationships between sisters Leah and Rachel, the official wives of the patriarch Jacob, and their handmaids Bilhah and Zilpah, whose children by Jacob are claimed by the wives as their own; the fact that the Gileadean system of state surrogacy is based on this Old Testament story
- ideas about different types of narrative: the fact that Offred herself states that her narrative is unreliable – 'it didn't happen that way. This is how it happened'
- the idea that the text is a first-person account of the Gileadean regime from the viewpoint of a typical handmaid
- that in calling the book ***The Handmaid's Tale*** rather than ***A Handmaid's Tale***, Pieixoto paradoxically elevates Offred and her status within the text
- possible mention of how the narrative is constructed in Atwood's sequel to the novel, *The Testaments*, in which the narrative is split three ways
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

Focus might be on:

- prose representations of gender, power and patriarchy as seen in modern literature, perhaps with a focus on the dystopian genre
- etc.

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

Focus might be on:

- the ways in which narrative methods are an integral part of strengthening the novel's presentation of gender, power and patriarchy
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

Focus might be on:

- aspects of narrative form and genre
- aspects of the ways in which Atwood has structured the text, eg the narrative stance of Offred and the privileging of her viewpoint
- language effects eg dialogue and description
- etc.

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

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

Accept any valid interpretations, any valid comments on contexts and any valid discussion of authorial methods.

Question 16***The Handmaid's Tale* – Margaret Atwood**

'In the days of anarchy, it was freedom to. Now you are being given freedom from. Don't underrate it', says Aunt Lydia to the trainee Handmaids at the Red Centre.

Examine the significance of freedom in *The Handmaid's Tale*.

[25 marks]

Possible content:

Please refer to pages 4 to 7.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

Focus might be on:

- that Aunt Lydia's glossing of the term 'freedom' shows how the meaning of words can change in a dystopian world; language itself becomes unstable as ideas and concepts are recategorised and redefined
- Atwood's questioning of the limits of freedom within the totalitarian theocracy of Gilead
- that the novel can be seen as a warning against taking the freedoms won by first- and second-generation feminists for granted, and that these freedoms are not necessarily permanent
- the ease with which the regime can manipulate the idea of freedom and deprive its citizens of their rights after the coup against the USA
- the lack of freedom for most inhabitants of the Gileadean regime – the harsh rules and punishments that limit personal freedom
- narrative flashbacks to the 'time before', when people (especially women) enjoyed freedom and even took it for granted in America, the self-styled 'Land of the Free'
- that during the 'Night' sections of the novel Offred seems to feel some limited type of freedom, either through returning to past memories or contemplating her present position
- that freedom is so limited in Gilead that even the most privileged members of society, the Commanders, need to break the rules (eg by setting up and visiting Jezebels)
- that some people refuse to give up their freedom and conform to the new rules, eg the nuns who voluntarily go to the Colonies rather than becoming handmaids, or the Unwomen, or rebels like Moira who choose to become Jezebels
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

Focus might be on:

- prose representations of freedom as seen in modern literature, perhaps with a focus on the dystopian genre
- etc.

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

Focus might be on:

- how Atwood's presentation of freedom may reveal aspects of the specific social, historical and cultural contexts of the 1980s and how responses to the theme might suggest changing responses over time
- the ways in which narrative methods are an integral part of strengthening the novel's presentation of freedom
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

Focus might be on:

- aspects of narrative form and genre
- aspects of the ways in which Atwood has structured the text, eg the narrative stance of Offred and the privileging of her viewpoint
- language effects, eg aspects of dialogue and description
- etc.

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

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

Accept any valid interpretations, any valid comments on contexts and any valid discussion of authorial methods.

Option 3

Section B: Drama and Poetry Contextual Linking

Question 17

Explore the significance of the struggle for identity in this extract.

Remember to include in your answer relevant detailed analysis of the ways that Boyd shapes meanings.

[25 marks]

Possible content:

Please refer to pages 4 to 7.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

Focus might be on:

- the World War II time period – the action taking place on the Home Front in London at the height of the Blitz, just before the beginning of the Modern Times synchronic time period
- the fact that Eva's wartime experience fighting for the freedom of others has now become a desperate personal struggle to assume a new identity
- Eva's struggle for personal freedom and a new identity as analogous to that of the countries attempting to achieve autonomy and self-determination on a global scale; possibly the idea that it is easier to focus on the fate of one individual rather than millions
- issues of gender, power, nationality and class, given Eva's original Russian birth and background, and her assumption of the stolen identity of an English girl; the contrasting names 'Eva Delectorskaya' and 'Sally Fairchild' may be seen as significant, with Sally's name perhaps seen as suggesting a fresh start; reference may be made to the future Cold War, which will further separate Eva from her country of origin
- the difficult moral choices Eva has to make in order to achieve her personal freedom and a new identity, eg lying to her landlady Mrs Dangerfield and the police; stealing the identity of a dead girl tragically killed along with the rest of her family; apparently planning to pick up a man in a club who may be able to protect her
- how Boyd uses Eva's theft of Sally's identity to suggest how unstable and at risk individual freedom can be within society as a whole; the fact that Eva willingly inflicts a minor injury on herself in order to pass as having survived the air raid that in fact killed Sally Fairchild and her entire family; the idea that freedom for some may be based upon disaster for others
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

Focus might be on:

- ideas about representations of the struggle for identity as seen in modern literature
- etc.

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

Focus might be on:

- ideas about how representations of the struggle for identity may be seen to have an impact upon the ways in which issues key to the context of Modern Times such as class, gender, race, culture and national identity are received and understood
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

Focus might be on:

- Boyd's decision to focalise the events through Eva's point of view while retaining a third-person stance
- elements typical of the genre of the spy thriller or escape/adventure story
- the cool factual tone used to describe horrific and tragic events; the listing of the five dead Fairchilds
- use of verisimilitude to add a sense of authenticity; use of specific numbers of the dead and missing; use of specific locations eg Deptford, Battersea, Rotherhithe, Victoria Station, Whitehall, the Chelsea Arts Club etc
- aspects of Boyd's structure, eg Eva's various journeys to establish her new identity
- the garish description of the bombed-out ruins of Carlisle House; the 'fuming moonscape', 'hills' and 'teetering cliffs' of dereliction
- the symbolism of Eva burning her passport in order to assume a new identity; the symbolic difference between her old and assumed names
- The persistent threat of Romer and the hints of their former close relationship; his 'perverse pleasure in her skills at evasion'
- the way in which Eva behaves in stereotypically 'feminine' ways such as weeping and feigning concussion in order to elicit sympathy; her cleverness in fooling the authorities – the police, the Home Office etc
- how Boyd's word choices and syntax within the narrative description suggests the 1940s wartime context and setting – eg the 'eligible' young men she hunts down at various night clubs
- etc.

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

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

Accept any valid interpretations, any valid comments on contexts and any valid discussion of authorial methods.

Question 18

Compare the significance of the struggle for identity in **two** other texts you have studied.

Remember to include in your answer reference to how meanings are shaped in the texts you are comparing.

You must use **one** drama text and **one** poetry text in your response, at least **one** of which must be a text written post-2000.

You must write about **at least two** poems.

[25 marks]

Possible content:

Please refer to pages 4 to 7.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

Focus might be on:

- interpretations of the significance of the struggle for identity as expressed in their two texts
- the extent to which the contrasting genres of the two texts affect the ways in which the struggle for identity are presented
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

Focus might be on:

- connections of similarity and/or difference at the level of subject matter/genre/attitudes and/or methods
- etc.

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

Focus might be on:

- differing representations of the struggle for identity and its possible effects and impact
- the psychological effects of the struggle for identity
- an analytical comparison of characters who respond to the struggle for identity in various ways
- how the struggle for identity may be viewed differently over time
- how the theme of the struggle for identity contributes to a text or texts as a whole
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

Focus might be on:

- methods of presenting and explaining the reasons for the prevalence and significance of the theme of the struggle for identity in modern literature
- possible purposes and effects of the presentation of the struggle for identity
- prose methods such as: narrative structure; point of view; chronology; use of dialogue; indirect speech; development of settings; ways of influencing the readers' response to character and incident
- dramatic methods such as: explicit structural devices; dramatic irony; stage directions; indirect ways of communicating the writers' messages and ideas; naturalistic, non-naturalistic, expressionist and other styles of representing character, incident and narrative
- poetic methods such as: types of verse form; explicit and implicit structural features; use of tropes for rhetorical effect; use of aural devices for rhetorical effect; elliptical use of language
- etc.

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

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

Accept any valid interpretations, any valid comments on contexts and any valid discussion of authorial methods.