



A-level
ENGLISH LITERATURE B
7717/1A

Paper 1A Literary genres: Aspects of tragedy

Mark scheme

June 2023

Version: 1.0 Final



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

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Level of response marking instructions

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

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

Step 1 Determine a level

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

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

Step 2 Determine a mark

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

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

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

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

Information for examiners marking Aspects of tragedy: closed book

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

The significance of closed book

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

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

Arriving at Marks

1. All questions are framed to address all the Assessment Objectives (AOs). Answers are marked holistically. Examiners need to read the whole answer taking into account its strengths and weaknesses and then place it in the appropriate band.
2. Examiners should avoid making early snap judgements before the whole answer has been read. Some students begin tentatively but go on to make relevant points.
3. Examiners should be prepared to use the full mark range in order to discriminate and not 'bunch' scripts in the middle for safety.
4. Examiners should mark positively. Although the possible content of the mark scheme provides some indicators for what students are likely to write about, examiners should be willing to reward what is actually there – **provided of course, that it is relevant to the question being asked.**
5. Examiners should remember that there are no right answers. Students' views which are relevant, well-argued and supported by appropriate textual evidence must receive credit whether the examiner agrees with the views or not. It is important to remain open to a student's ideas which could be unusual or unorthodox.
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 9. The key words for the bands are important and are printed below.

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

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

Advice about marking each section

Section A

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

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

Section B

13. Examiners need to bear in mind the following key points when marking questions based on single texts:

- has the student engaged in a debate or constructed an argument in line with the question?
- has the student referred to different parts of the play to support their views?
- has the student referred to Shakespeare's dramatic method?
- the student's AO1 competence.

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

Section C

14. Examiners need to bear in mind the following key points when marking questions connecting two texts:

- has the student focused on the aspect of tragedy set up in the question and referred to two texts?
- has the student engaged in a debate or constructed an argument around the two texts in line with the question?
- has the student commented on the writers' authorial methods in the two texts?
- has the student adhered to the rubric – one drama text and one other, with one of the texts being pre-1900?
- has the student given substantial coverage of two texts?
- the student's AO1 competence.

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

Annotation
































15. Examiners should remember that annotation is directed solely to senior examiners.

16. In addition to giving a mark, examiners should write a brief summative comment indicating how the mark has been arrived at. These comments are likely to mirror the appropriate mark band descriptors but comments must not be mechanical. Examiners need to describe student performance.

17. The most important annotation you will use elsewhere is the tick. This will signal positive achievement in relation to the question. Ticks should be placed in the body of an answer where apt points are made. Further ticks should be given for development of points and support. Strong answers will have more ticks than weaker responses. If points are partially made the bracketed tick can be used.

18. Apart from making a summative comment in a comment box, you could use the comment box elsewhere in your marking if you need to explain your thinking to a senior marker. However, in most cases the annotation stamps will be sufficient to explain your ticks or the absence of them.

The following annotation is available for use on e-Marker 2:

Annotation Name	Toolbar Image	Details	Examples of Use on Script	Y/N
Annotation Type: Stamp				
Correct		Toolbar Tooltip: Correct		Y
Seen		Toolbar Tooltip: Seen		Y
NotRelevant		Toolbar Tooltip: Not Relevant		Y
Red Line		 Toolbar Tooltip: Red Line		Y
Green Empty Comment		Toolbar Tooltip: Green Empty Comment No Default Text - text shown in screenshot was typed into annotation by user		Y
AssessObjective1		Toolbar Tooltip: Assessment Objective 1		Y
Repetition		Toolbar Tooltip: Repetition		Y
Vague		Toolbar Tooltip: Vague		Y
Development		Toolbar Tooltip: Development		Y
SomethingHere		Toolbar Tooltip: Something here		Y
Unfocused		Toolbar Tooltip: Unfocused		Y
UnclearExpression		Toolbar Tooltip: Unclear expression		Y
LackOfClarity		Toolbar Tooltip: Lack of Clarity		Y
FactualInaccuracy		Toolbar Tooltip: Factual Inaccuracy		Y
PartiallyMadePoint		Toolbar Tooltip: Partially made point		Y

19. Please remember that scripts can go back to students, so although your audience is a senior examiner, you must express yourself temperately when writing in the comment boxes.

The assessment objectives and their significance

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

Reminder: The AOs are as follows:

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts.

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

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

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

MARK SCHEME – A-LEVEL ENGLISH LITERATURE B – 7717/1A – JUNE 2023

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

<p>Band 3 Straightforward/ Relevant 11–15 marks</p> <p>'Straightforward' work is shown when students make their ideas in relation to the task clearly known.</p> <p>'Relevant' work is shown when students are focused on the task and use detail in an appropriate and supportive way.</p>	AO5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> straightforward engagement with the debate set up in the task 	<p>This band is characterised by straightforward and relevant work where the student's response to the task is clear and intelligible.</p> <p>At the top of the band students will demonstrate consistent straightforward understanding in the course of their argument. Ideas will be developed relevantly.</p> <p>At the bottom of the band there will be flashes of relevant understanding with evidence of straightforward thinking.</p>
	AO4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> explores connections across literary texts arising out of generic study in a straightforward way 	
	AO3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> straightforward understanding of the significance of relevant contexts in relation to the task relevant connections between those contexts and the genre studied 	
	AO2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> straightforward understanding of authorial methods in relation to the task relevant engagement with how meanings are shaped by the methods used 	
	AO1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	
<p>Band 2 Simple/Generalised 6–10 marks</p> <p>'Simple' work is shown when students write in an unelaborated and basic way in relation to the task.</p> <p>'Generalised' work is shown when students write without regard to particular details.</p>	AO5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> simple and generalised response to the debate set up in the task 	<p>This band is characterised by simple and generalised work which is mainly linked to the task.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>At the bottom of the band there will be inconsistency, but the beginnings of a simple and generalised understanding.</p>
	AO4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> simple exploration of connections across literary texts arising out of generic study 	
	AO3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> simple understanding of the significance of relevant contexts in relation to the task generalised connections between those contexts and the genre studied 	
	AO2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> simple understanding of authorial methods in relation to the task generalised engagement with how meanings are shaped by the methods used 	
	AO1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 B – 7717/1A – JUNE 2023

<p>Band 1 Largely irrelevant/largely misunderstood/largely inaccurate 1–5 marks</p> <p>‘Largely irrelevant’ work is shown when students write in an unclear way with only occasional reference to what is required by the question.</p> <p>‘Largely misunderstood’ and ‘largely inaccurate’ work is shown when knowledge of the text is insecure, hazy and often wrong.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 generic study; little sense of an argument in relation to the task 	<p>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.</p> <p>At the top of the band students will mention some unconnected points in relation to the task during the course of their writing. The writing is likely to lack clarity.</p> <p>At the bottom of the band there will be no connection with the task; the writing will be hard to follow and irrelevant.</p>
<p>0 marks</p>		<p>No marks for response when nothing is written or where response has no connection to the text(s) or task.</p>	

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Othello – William Shakespeare

Read the extract below and then answer the question.

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

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

[25 marks]

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

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

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

Please refer to pages 4–8.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

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

Some possible ideas:

- the tragic trajectory of the extract with the explanation by Iago of his reasons for his seeming support of Othello; his declaration that he is not what he is; the shift to Roderigo's asking how Othello is so high in fortune (alluding to his marriage to Desdemona); the emerging plan of Iago to rouse Brabantio to poison Othello's delight; the vulgar shouting at Brabantio's window with the intention to alarm and frighten him; Brabantio's appearance, having been woken from sleep
- contextualisation: before this extract, Iago's explanation to Roderigo of why he hates Othello; the revelation of his professional jealousy; Iago's bitterness at his not being promoted as he should have been by 'the old gradation'; following the extract, Iago's stirring of Brabantio's anxiety about his daughter's elopement with Othello by using crude sexual, racist and derogatory language (while keeping himself anonymous); Roderigo's revealing his identity to Brabantio; Brabantio's distress at finding that Desdemona has indeed eloped with Othello
- the night setting and the darkness which is fitting for the evil that is on display
- Iago as tragic villain – here and elsewhere
- the beginning of Iago's plotting against Othello
- Iago's deception – here and throughout the play
- Iago's hatred of Othello
- his setting out his strategy as a duplicitous servant
- his disturbing reversal of God's 'I am that I am'
- Iago's being 'almost devil and only not quite devil'
- his manipulation of Roderigo

- his plan to rouse Brabantio and set discord between him and Othello
- his vulgar inflammatory calling to Brabantio about theft and his later racist comments about Othello
- Iago's delight in creating chaos – 'like fire in populous cities'
- Roderigo as tragic victim being lured into Iago's schemes
- the ease with which Iago is able to work upon him
- Roderigo's not understanding Iago's first speech
- Othello and Desdemona, as victims of Iago's plotting, despite their being absent here
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

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

- tragic villainy as seen in Iago's behaviour, intentions and language
- tragic victims as seen in Roderigo, Brabantio, Othello and Desdemona
- chaos as seen in Iago's disturbing the quiet and calm of the Venetian night
- etc.

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

With respect to significance of contexts students might focus on:

- the social context of masters and servants
- the religious context with the allusion to Exodus and God's words to Moses
- the family context of fathers and daughters
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

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

- the darkness of the night-time setting
- the dynamics between Roderigo and Iago on stage with Iago's control of the situation and speech
- Iago's speech which is more like a soliloquy given Roderigo's inability to engage with its complexity
- the explanation in the first half of Iago's speech as to why he follows Othello followed by speech that is more dense and enigmatic
- the breaking of the regular blank verse line with 'For sir' to mark the change in direction
- Roderigo's racist language when speaking of Othello
- Iago's use of active and inflammatory verbs as he instructs Roderigo to call up Brabantio (rouse, poison, proclaim, incense)
- Iago's use of metaphor to show the extent of his hatred of Othello ('Plague him with flies')
- his incendiary repetition of 'Thieves' as he shouts at Brabantio's window
- Brabantio's appearance and the contrast of the old man above woken from sleep and the dark conspiracy in the shadows
- the use of names and terms of address (Moor, sir, 'thick-lips', Signor)
- etc.

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

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

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

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

Accept any valid discussion of interpretations, any valid discussion of contexts and any valid discussion of dramatic methods which are grounded in the passage and which relate to the play as a whole.

0 2

King Lear – William Shakespeare

Read the extract below and then answer the question.

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

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

[25 marks]

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

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

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

Please refer to pages 4–8.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

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

Some possible ideas:

- the tragic trajectory of the extract with Kent's vain attempt to support Cordelia being met with Lear's explosive anger; Lear's not wanting to even look at Cordelia; his terrible rage which anaesthetises his stage audience who cannot carry out his instructions; his splitting Cordelia's portion of the kingdom between Albany and Cornwall; his calmer instruction of what he now intends – to stay with Gonerill and Regan for a month in turn with a reservation of a hundred knights; Kent's brave/foolhardy intervention to try to persuade Lear to change his mind; Lear's renewed anger leading to his attempt to physically attack Kent
- contextualisation: before the extract, Lear's demand of a love test and Cordelia's refusal to play the game, her use of 'nothing' which triggers his rage; her explanation of how she cannot measure love in the way he demands; Lear's violent denunciation of her; his saying that from this moment she is in effect dead to him; following the extract, Albany and Cornwall's intervention to prevent Lear from striking Kent; Kent's continuing defiance until Lear orders him to kneel on his allegiance; Lear's banishment of Kent; Kent's farewell messages to all the sisters; his exit
- Lear's tragic errors of judgement
- his uncontrolled anger
- Lear's admitting that he loved Cordelia most and that he expected to live with her and have her looking after him
- the visual display of his putting his faith in the wrong daughters and rewarding them
- his thoughtless, selfish and unreasonable decision to say he will stay with each of his daughters in turn with a reservation of a hundred knights

- the ridiculous idea that he can both give away his power and retain his title and ‘all th’addition to a king’
- the blind determination of Lear to divide the kingdom
- Kent as a figure of goodness and sense trying to prevent tragedy
- his love and respect for Lear which is grounded in a loyal history (Kent has hitherto been the true blank of Lear’s eye)
- Kent’s commitment to honesty
- his bravery
- his being prepared to lay down his life for the well-being of his master
- the contrast between Kent and all the other nobles on stage who are silent
- the focus on seeing and blindness
- the hint that Lear is or will become ‘mad’
- the link between anger and madness in both Lear and Kent
- the violence of Lear’s threat as his anger goes out of control
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

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

- the tragic aspect of the errors of judgement of the tragic hero
- the aspect of division as seen in Lear’s splitting the kingdom, his turning against Cordelia and the argument between Lear and his most loyal servant
- the tragic aspect of blindness, Lear’s not having the foresight to see where bad decisions will lead
- the aspect of goodness seen in the behaviours of Cordelia and Kent
- etc.

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

With respect to significance of contexts students might focus on:

- the context of the court and the behavioural expectations of courtiers and subjects to their king
- the context of family as seen in how Lear intends to stay with his two daughters
- the context of power as seen in how Lear demands silence from Kent
- the context of the emotions as seen in the anger displayed by both Kent and Lear and the love that Kent shows towards Lear
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

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

- the formal court setting with all the courtiers attending the ceremony which has been disrupted
- the confrontation of Lear and Kent which is watched by the stage audience and the theatre audience
- the way that when Lear demands that someone fetches France and Burgundy, no one stirs
- Lear’s movement to attack Kent at the end of the extract
- the parting of the coronet on stage to symbolise the splitting of the kingdom
- Lear’s address to Cordelia who is silent
- the irony of Lear’s having given away his power and yet still referring to himself in the royal plural
- the Latinate stately diction to emphasise Lear’s regal position

- the emotional language used by Kent and Lear
- Lear's invoking Apollo
- his referring to himself as a dragon to show his power
- the repeated motif of seeing and not seeing
- etc.

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

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

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

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

Accept any valid discussion of interpretations, any valid discussion of contexts and any valid discussion of dramatic methods which are grounded in the passage and which relate to the play as a whole.

0 3

***Othello* – William Shakespeare**

'In *Othello* the female characters are innocent victims of male power.'

To what extent do you agree with this view?

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

[25 marks]

Some possible content is given below. It suggests some of the ways the Assessment Objectives might be addressed. Some ideas will inevitably address more than one AO.

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

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

Please refer to pages 4–8.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

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

Some students might consider:

- Desdemona and Emilia who are abused and murdered by their husbands
- Desdemona who is a pawn in Iago's game
- Desdemona who is publicly humiliated by Othello when he is in a jealous rage
- Desdemona who is slapped in public by Othello
- Desdemona who is the victim of aggressive and insulting language
- Desdemona who is not listened to by Othello (he does not treat her like an equal and does not ask her about the rumours he hears)
- Emilia who is publicly mocked by Iago
- Emilia who is scorned by Iago and spoken to with contempt
- Emilia who has the handkerchief snatched from her by her husband who will not tell her why he wants it
- Emilia who is told to hold her tongue by her husband in the final act
- Emilia who is verbally abused by Othello who accuses her of being a keeper of a brothel
- Bianca who is used by Cassio for sex
- Bianca as a prostitute who is at the mercy and pay of men
- Bianca who is laughed at by Cassio
- Bianca whose love for Cassio is not taken seriously
- etc.

Some students might consider:

- Desdemona's not being a victim when she defies her father in Act 1 and speaks out eloquently against him
- Desdemona who is not a victim when she persuades Othello and the Duke to agree to her going to Cyprus showing that she has powers of persuasion
- Emilia who is far from a victim when she accuses Othello at the end of the play of stupidity and cruelty against his innocent wife
- Emilia who exposes the villainy of Iago and will not hold her peace
- Emilia who calls Iago out as pernicious whose soul, she hopes, will rot half a gram a day
- Bianca who, in anger, defies Cassio and throws the handkerchief at him
- Bianca who survives
- Desdemona's not being innocent given that she elopes with Othello
- Desdemona's not always being honest, her saying that she is the cause of her own murder, for example
- Emilia's stealing Desdemona's handkerchief and in a sense making Desdemona a victim of her power
- Emilia's lying about the handkerchief to Desdemona, so not innocent
- Emilia's scornful treatment of Bianca showing that there is no sisterhood amongst women
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

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

- the tragic aspect of innocence as seen in Desdemona's being wrongly accused of adultery
- the aspect of tragic victims as seen in the characters of Emilia and Desdemona who are both murdered
- the aspect of power as seen in the physical power of Othello and the intellectual power of Iago which is used against women
- etc.

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

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

- the gender context as seen in the differences in statuses of women and men in the play
- the context of power as seen in the wielding of power by Iago, Othello and Cassio
- the social context as seen in the ways that women are regarded sexually in terms of chastity or licentiousness
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

With respect to dramatic method students might focus on:

- structural issues relating to where the female characters appear in the play's tragic trajectory
- dramatic actions relating to when female characters are victims of male power, for example the murders of Desdemona and Emilia in Act 5
- dramatic actions taken by the female characters, eg the taking of Desdemona's handkerchief by Emilia
- entrances and exits involving the female characters in relation to their victimhood

- the language used to address or refer to the female characters
- the language, and songs, used by the female characters themselves
- settings associated with the female characters in relation to their being victims
- imagery used to characterise the female characters
- etc.

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

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

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

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

Accept any valid discussion of interpretations, any valid discussion of contexts and any relevant integrated comments of dramatic methods that are embedded into the argument.

0 4

Othello – William Shakespeare

Explore the significance of reputation to the tragedy of *Othello*.

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

[25 marks]

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

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

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

Please refer to pages 4–8.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

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

Some possible ideas:

- the emptiness of the bubble reputation which is fragile and easily burst
- the loss of reputation being equated with what is bestial
- Othello's being defined, in Venice, by his reputation as a worthy General
- his defining himself by his reputation, his arrogance coming from his sense of his noble and long-standing reputation
- reputation as the driving force for Othello's anger and jealousy – he fears he will be mocked because his wife is cheating on him with his 'officer'
- the loss of his reputation which leads him to murder Desdemona
- reputation as the driving force for Iago – he feels he has been overlooked for promotion because Othello has broken with tradition and given the lieutenancy to Cassio instead of him
- Iago's success as a villain being dependent on his reputation as an honest and plain-speaking man
- his using reputation as a deceiving tool
- Iago's being spurred to further anger when the drunken Cassio pulls rank on Iago ('the Lieutenant is to be saved before the Ancient')
- the visual display of the drunken Cassio losing his reputation in such a dramatic and demeaning way
- the way that Cassio's loss of reputation triggers a loss of Othello's reputation for calm when he says 'Now, by heaven, My blood begins my safer guides to rule'
- Cassio's wretchedness when he is sacked, his bemoaning his loss of reputation
- Iago's using the subject of reputation to bind Cassio to him in their discussion of reputation
- Iago's dismissing the value of reputation as 'an idle and most false imposition; oft got without merit and lost without deserving'
- Othello's wanting to restore his reputation at the end in his final speech; his wanting to write his own epitaph ('Then must you speak of...')

- Desdemona's despair when she is called a whore by Othello, how her reputation as honest and pure goes to the core of who she is
- Lodovico's marking the loss of Othello's reputation after Othello strikes Desdemona in public ('this would not be believed in Venice')
- the reputation of Bianca as a prostitute that leads others to disbelieve anything she says and to dismiss her
- Bianca's reputation that leads Cassio to abuse her
- Brabantio's loss of reputation when Desdemona marries Othello and doesn't obey him
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

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

- the tragic aspect of reputation: Othello's reputation is at first high and then the tragic hero falls from grace and in the end loses his reputation
- the aspect of villainy as seen in Iago's abuse of reputation as a tool to deceive others
- the aspect of tragic innocence as seen in Desdemona's retaining her reputation throughout the play
- etc.

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

With respect to significance of contexts students might focus on:

- the military context where reputation on the battlefield is valued above all else
- the social context where women are judged on their sexual reputation
- the moral context where recognised values are abused and turned upside down
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

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

- the repetition of the word 'reputation' at different points in the play
- the dramatic demonstration – in terms of events – where reputation is foregrounded, for example Cassio's losing his reputation when drunk, Iago's playing on his reputation as an honest man to insinuate himself into Othello's thinking, Othello's loss of reputation when he kills Desdemona, his attempt to rebuild it when he takes his own life
- how these events structure the play
- Othello's elevated style and language when he sets up his reputation before the Senate
- Cassio's singing and unguarded speech when he is drunk and when his reputation is soon to crash
- the use of prose for 'friendship' when Cassio bewails his loss of reputation when he bares his soul to Iago
- etc.

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

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

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

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

Accept any valid discussion of interpretations, any valid discussion of contexts and any relevant integrated comments of dramatic methods that are embedded into the argument.

0 5

King Lear – William Shakespeare

‘Gloucester is a man more sinned against than sinning.’

To what extent do you agree with this view?

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

[25 marks]

Some possible content is given below. It suggests some of the ways the Assessment Objectives might be addressed. Some ideas will inevitably address more than one AO.

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

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

Please refer to pages 4–8.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

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

Some students might consider:

- that Lear’s words on the heath (‘I am a man more sinned against than sinning’) equally apply to Gloucester
- that Gloucester’s sins are not quantifiable
- his being toyed with by the gods who ‘kill us for their sport’
- his ‘punishment’ by Regan and Cornwall for helping Lear – that he must ‘smell his way to Dover’ – which is beyond cruel
- the callous plot of Edmund to become Earl of Gloucester which outweighs Gloucester’s adultery
- Gloucester’s being locked out of his own home by Regan and Cornwall
- the disregard with which he is held by Regan, Cornwall and Edmund who have no respect for his age or his reverence
- his sadness at not being able to see his good son Edgar – or to know of his existence until he is dying
- his being driven to despair by all the events that happen and wanting to end his life
- his understanding of his wrongs and his regret and sorrow for what he has done
- his genuine love for his sons
- his basic goodness shown when he tries to help Lear and when he stands up to Regan and Cornwall at his trial
- etc.

Some students might consider:

- that Lear's words have a particular resonance for Lear but not for Gloucester
- Gloucester's sins not being quantifiable
- his sin of adultery, spawning Edmund and not taking responsibility for him
- his disrespect for Edgar's mother, since Edmund was conceived (in 'good sport') at the point when Edgar's mother had just given birth to Edgar
- his weakness and complacency in not standing up to Lear in the court and not siding with the forces of good
- his weakness in his own castle when he allows Regan and Cornwall to take over and when they tell him to bolt his doors against Lear
- his giving in to despair and his attempted suicide which in Christian theology is a mortal sin
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

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

- the aspect of tragic flaws as seen in Gloucester's gullibility and quick temper
- the aspect of sin as seen in Gloucester's gloating over his adultery with Edmund's mother
- the aspect of cruelty as seen in those who sin against Gloucester, eg Edmund's treachery and Regan and Cornwall's plucking out his eyes
- etc.

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

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

- the context of morality as seen in the judgments made about Gloucester's sinning
- the context of justice as seen in Gloucester's mock trial
- the context of power as seen in the shifting of power from Gloucester to the younger generation
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

With respect to dramatic method students might focus on:

- structural issues relating to where Gloucester appears in the play
- actions taken by Gloucester in relation to his sin or his being sinned against
- the terrible spectacle of the plucking out of Gloucester's eyes
- the different settings where Gloucester sins or is sinned against, eg his castle, the heath, the cliffs of Dover
- his use of prose or verse in relation to his sinning or being sinned against
- the violent language used by him when he is ill tempered and angry
- the vicious language used towards him or about him by those who are cruel to him
- the use of supernatural imagery in relation to him
- etc.

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

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

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

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

Accept any valid discussion of interpretations, any valid discussion of contexts and any relevant integrated comments of dramatic methods that are embedded into the argument.

0 6

King Lear – William Shakespeare

'In *King Lear*, Shakespeare presents humanity as relentlessly self-destructive.'

To what extent do you agree with this view?

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

[25 marks]

Some possible content is given below. It suggests some of the ways the Assessment Objectives might be addressed. Some ideas will inevitably address more than one AO.

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

Please refer to pages 4–8.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

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

Some students might consider:

- Albany's prediction that if the gods do not send their spirits to tame the vile offences then 'Humanity must perforce prey on itself,/Like monsters of the deep'
- the law of the jungle, survival of the fittest ideas that run through the play
- the use of the sub-plot to consolidate the relentlessness of humanity's turning on itself
- Gloucester's story replicating Lear's to suggest that humanity is at war with itself
- Gloucester's pronouncement that there are mutinies in cities 'in countries, discord; in palaces, treason; and the bond cracked 'twixt son and father' and that 'machinations, hollowness, treachery and all ruinous disorders' are inevitable
- the sequencing throughout the play of characters turning on each other, beginning with Lear and ending with Gonerill's murder of Regan and her self destruction
- the viciousness and unexpectedness of Lear's turning against Cordelia and Kent
- the hatred shown by Gonerill and Regan towards Cordelia
- the contempt the sisters show towards their father as they prey on his weakness and take his land
- the barbaric nature of the treatment of Gloucester by Regan and Cornwall who seem to relish the monstrous plucking out of his eyes
- the developing distrust and jealousy between Gonerill and Regan
- Gonerill's poisoning of Regan and her own self-destruction
- Edmund's evil and joyful plotting against his brother and father
- his playing the two sisters off against each other for his own gain
- his preparedness to kill Albany to secure power through Gonerill
- Gonerill's plot to kill her husband so that she can bed and wed Edmund and prevent Regan's marrying him
- the emerging civil war which gets overtaken by the national war against France
- etc.

Some students might consider:

- that humanity's turning on itself is not relentless

- the goodness that punctuates the evil at different times during the play
- the enduring flame of goodness as seen in Cordelia, Kent, Edgar and the Fool
- Kent's defence of Cordelia
- his willingness to lay down his life for her and for Lear
- the Fool's decision to stay with Lear to help him even though he knows it is foolish
- Gloucester's attempt to relieve the king, his master, thereby incurring the wrath of the sisters
- Edgar's choosing not to just look out for himself but to help his father when he is blinded
- the good servant's stepping in to revenge Gloucester's eyes
- Cordelia's decision to join the war against the English to help her father
- her sacrifice for her father
- Albany's moral awakening in Act 4
- the Christian thread of kindness, love and forgiveness which counters humanity at its worst
- the discussion of Albany, Kent and Edgar at the end of the play when there is complete selflessness and no sense of humanity preying on itself
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

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

- the aspect of internecine warfare amongst the characters within the play
- the aspect of death and destruction as implied by humanity preying on itself and as seen in the chaos that descends on Britain
- the aspect of cruelty as seen in the locking out of Lear and the blinding of Gloucester
- etc.

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

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

- the context of nature as seen in the law of the jungle ideas that run through the play
- the context of morality as seen in the amoral thinking of Gonerill, Regan and Edmund
- the context of power as seen in the pursuit of power by the younger generation
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

With respect to dramatic method students might focus on:

- structural issues relating to where in the play humanity is preying on itself
- Albany's attack on Gonerill about humanity preying on itself in Act 4 which is a turning point for him and structurally places him on the side of the good forces
- Edmund's soliloquy where he sets out his philosophy at the start of Act 1:2
- actions taken by the characters who prey on others, eg Edmund's mock fight with Edgar to beguile Gloucester, Cornwall's plucking out the eyes of Gloucester, Gonerill's poisoning of Regan
- the different settings where humanity preys on itself, for example Gloucester's castle from where Lear is cast out and where Gloucester has his eyes gouged out
- the irony of Shakespeare's use of the natural world of the heath where humanity shows itself as kind as opposed to bestial
- the use of natural and animal imagery to show the fall of humanity
- the contrasting use of religious language as a counterbalance to that which is violent and destructive
- etc.

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

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

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

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

Accept any valid discussion of interpretations, any valid discussion of contexts and any relevant integrated comments of dramatic methods that are embedded into the argument.

0 7

‘Tragic heroes begin with power and then lose it.’

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

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

[25 marks]

Some possible content is given below. It suggests some of the ways the Assessment Objectives might be addressed. Some ideas will inevitably address more than one AO.

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

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

Please refer to pages 4–8.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

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

Some students might consider:

- Willy’s having patriarchal power as a father and husband in the Loman household especially in the past; his views being listened to unchallenged by Linda and Happy; Willy’s control within the family; the authority he wields over Charlie in the back story; his apparent power in his job; his losing power, authority and his job as the play progresses; his growing old and his understanding that his power is diminishing
- Richard as king presiding over the court and country: his making executive decisions, deciding on the punishments for Bolingbroke and Mowbray, confiscating Gaunt’s lands, deciding to war with Ireland; his losing power when Bolingbroke returns from exile; losing the support of the people; losing his crown; losing his life
- the powerful authority of Cuchulain who is revered as a mighty warrior who, after his victorious fight with Finmole, discovers that it is his son and then collapses under the weight of guilt, losing authority and respect from the Red Branch Kings, becoming utterly powerless as he wars with the sea and dies; the Titanic, which was full of majestic splendour in the backstory but which lost power to the iceberg and now lies at the bottom of the Atlantic; Adam and Satan in the Monk’s story who began in high degree but then fell from glory and became powerless; Tithonus in the backstory who believed that he was invincible, a youth with immense beauty beloved of the beautiful Eos, able to command a wish of immortality from the gods but who now withers with age, living on the quiet edge of the world begging for death which is not granted
- the knight in *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* whose title suggested his illustriousness, who was able to use his power over the faery child, enjoy a manna soaked reverie with her but who fell under her spell and now is alone, woebegone and dying on the cold hill side; Lamia, who exerts power over Hermes so that she can become a woman, wielding that power to enchant Lycius, enjoying sexual reverie with him in her magical palace but then losing power to cold philosophy and truth, losing authority and love; Lycius’ power as a young man at the start of his story, enjoying his studies in Corinth, then being loved by a beautiful woman whom he soon controls; his power in insisting that he has a public wedding; his losing power at the wedding as Lamia is exposed as a demon; his losing all signs of life and dying

- Tess, who has the power of youth, beauty and a high vision of life at the start of the novel, a power which captures the narrator, Alec D'Urberville and Angel Clare but whose power over Angel soon diminishes when the story of her pregnancy becomes known to him; Hardy's imbuing her with power by mythologising her as Demeter and Artemis and essential woman; Tess' losing power after her marriage and being abandoned by Angel; her increasing misery as the novel progresses culminating in her suffering at Flintcomb-Ash where she is utterly powerless; her death at the power of the authorities at Winconcester jail
- Gatsby's wealth and authority at the start of Nick's story about him; Gatsby's ability to host enormous parties, flout the law, have power over law enforcers; his capturing the heart of Daisy when he is reunited with her but losing that power to Tom's hard malice leading to his isolation, loneliness and his ultimate powerlessness when he is murdered by George Wilson
- etc.

Some students might consider:

- Willy's being powerless from the start of the play, unable to even kill himself; his lack of authority with Biff who argues with him exposing him as a fake, the sham of his apparent power in the past – his not having real power at all; the emptiness of his dream; Biff as tragic hero and his power and confidence which grows as the play progresses, who has a power to resist the American Dream, who knows who he is
- Richard whose power at the start of the play is founded on the sand of his flatterers; his being a weak king but one whose power over his audiences ironically increases towards the end of the play; the power he wields over Bolingbroke in the deposition scene; his command of the stage and power of speech; Bolingbroke as tragic hero who gains power as the play progresses, initially being banished but returning, amassing an army and then becoming king
- the powerlessness of the knight in *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* at the start of the poem when the narrator finds him on the cold hill side, his delusion of his power in his backstory given that the faery child enthralls him as she has done other princes and kings; the powerlessness of Isabella from the start of the poem given that she is a woman and at the mercy of her brothers; her gaining some power as the poem progresses when she takes action to find the body of the dead Lorenzo, taking off his head and nourishing it in her pot of basil with her tears; Porphyro's gaining power as the poem develops, his being an outsider, banned from Madeline's castle, his finding a way to enter the castle, persuading Angela to help him, insinuating himself into Madeline's dream and running away with her
- *The Convergence of the Twain*'s opening with the Titanic already at the bottom of the ocean, and therefore powerless; the ship's being potentially powerless all the time since fate had already determined the meeting of the Titanic with the iceberg; the 'Immanent Will' and 'Spinner of the Years' having ultimate power; Miss Gee's having no power at any point in the poem, indeed, the whole point being her powerlessness; Satan's having been cast out from heaven at the start of the Extract from *Paradise Lost* but gaining power in hell with his troops and seeing some merit in reigning in Hell rather than serving in Heaven; Tithonus' powerlessness from the start of the poem when he longingly looks at nature wishing he too could decay and fall; his desperation from the start because he has no power to change his situation
- Tess' being an ordinary working-class country girl with no power to control events in her life; her being at the mercy of the vagaries of her family; her being a descendant of the once powerful D'Urbervilles but belonging now to a family that is powerless from the start, their family having already 'fallen'; Tess' gaining power at the end of the novel when she takes action and kills Alec D'Urberville, the quiet power of her final days when she is at peace and resigned to her fate having achieved fulfilment
- Gatsby's having no power at the start of his life, his coming from shiftless and unsuccessful farm people; his gaining power when he changed his name and decided on his own future; his being a Platonic conception of himself to which he is faithful to the end; his having a lasting power over Nick who chooses to write his story and in the process elevates him
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

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

- the aspect of political power as seen in Richard's wielding power over his subjects in exacting taxes or in exiling his opponents
- the aspect of physical power as seen in those who exert a physical power over those who are weaker
- the aspect of changing fortunes as seen by the tragic heroes who have power at the start of their stories and then lose it
- etc.

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

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

- the political context as seen in the power employed by the powerful against the powerless
- the gender context as seen in the way that men use the power of might as seen in Cuchulain and women who have alluring sexual power as seen in Lamia and Tess
- the economic context as seen in the way that wealth equates to power in *The Great Gatsby* and *Salesman*
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

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

- structural issues relating to where the tragic heroes appear in the texts in relation to their power or otherwise
- the way that the loss of power can act as turning points in the stories
- the use of linear and dislocated chronologies to tell the stories of the loss of power of the tragic heroes
- the settings where tragic heroes are powerful or powerless
- the dialogue that shows the power or powerlessness of the tragic heroes
- the use of narrators to chart the loss of power
- the language that is used in relation to power and loss
- etc.

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

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

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

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

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

0 8

Explore the significance of nature and the natural environment to the tragedies of **two** texts you have studied.

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

[25 marks]

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

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

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

Please refer to pages 4–8.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

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

Some possible ideas:

- the natural green world of Willy's dreams as a contrast to the grey urban world of Willy's reality; Willy's yearning for the wildernesses of Africa and Alaska where Ben goes in search of diamonds; the longing Willy has for the rural frontier of America where his father built and sold flutes; the farm where Biff worked with his hands, helping horses to foal, Willy's dream of owning a home in the country where he can raise vegetables and chickens which point up the emptiness of his life in the city where the seeds won't grow in his garden for lack of light; the sadness of Willy's remembrance of a former time and the images of lilac, wisteria, peonies and daffodils; Biff's longing for a life in the natural world which sets him at odds with his father; his desire for a life out West where he can build a ranch
- Gaunt's deathbed speech where England is compared to the Garden of Eden, a symbol of the former golden age and a reminder of Richard's sin; the way the garden image is used to point up Richard's tragic decline; Richard's entry at the point where the garden speech ends signifying his inevitable fall; the Garden scene in Act 3:5 where the garden is used to reveal thoughts about Richard of the common man; the political allegory of the good ruler who tends the garden, cropping, pruning and weeding in contrast to Richard who is inept; the garden as a place for Queen Isabel to find some peace and tranquility but where she learns the truth about her husband; the pity felt for Isabel by the gardener who plants rue where he sees her tears fall; nature being used to mark Richard's learning and change – his initially believing he is in control of everything ('not all the water in the rough rude sea/Can wash the balm off from an anointed king') to his respect for nature before his death when he imagines a new world where there is some humility, where he sees that the human and non-human world need to negotiate, where his horse is not controlled by himself but has its own nature, where he forgives it for now carrying Bolingbroke – 'since thou, created to be aw'd by man, Wast born to bear?', where he sees himself as no better than an ass ('I was not made a horse,/And yet I bear a burthen like an ass'; the way that the king and aristocracy approximate the natural environment as their territory (Richard 'farms' his kingdom out)

- the cold hill side of *La Belle Dame Sans Merci*'s tragic present to signify the imminent death of the knight and a fitting backdrop to his tragic tale, the summery meads of the back story when the knight was happy with the faery's child which contrasts to the land where nature seems dead; the idyllic world of Florence where Isabella's and Lorenzo's love grows and where she is initially happy; the forest where Lorenzo is murdered and where Isabella digs up his body and severs his head to put in her pot of basil; the mixture of the beautiful and the macabre associated with nature; the natural faery land of Crete at the opening of *Lamia* and how the beauty of the place is matched by the deceptive beauty of Lamia; the snake in the idyllic garden; the contrast of the woodland where Hermes flies and the city of Corinth which is the place where Lycius dies; the natural world of *The Eve of St Agnes* which is outside Madeline's castle which contrasts with what happens inside; the natural world into which Porphyro and Madeline ultimately flee
- the seaside setting of *Jessie Cameron* which is the backdrop to the conflict between Jessie and her neighbour; the natural world with the incoming tide which eventually takes her life; the ocean bed in *The Convergence of the Twain* where the fish continue their lives happily while the great Titanic begins to decay; the beautiful naturally decaying woods in *Tithonus* which the tragic hero envies as he is committed eternally to immortality, the glorious breaking of dawn with the ascendancy of Eos which contrasts with Tithonus' withered state; the pastoral Irish countryside in *The Death of Cuchulain* where Finmole peacefully tends his sheep before he is requested to fight his father – his moving from a state of innocence to experience; the sea with which Cuchulain wars as he feels intense misery and guilt when he learns he has killed his son
- the natural world of Wessex where Tess resides as a child of nature; the luscious vale of Talbothays where Tess experiences happiness before her descent into misery; Angel's seeing Tess as a product of nature; the bleakness of Flintcomb-Ash where nature is red in tooth and claw
- the natural environment of the Sound between Gatsby's mansion and Daisy's house which symbolises the gulf between them; the farming background of Gatsby's shiftless and unsuccessful parents from whom he wanted to escape to become one of the wealthy urban elite; Nick's focus on nature at the start of the novel where spring signals a growing sense of optimism; the subversion, appropriation or control of nature by Gatsby and the elite – Gatsby's wanting to cut Nick's grass, the 'blue gardens' of his party, the overabundance of flowers ordered for Daisy's visit, Daisy's name and her calling Nick a 'rose'; the 'valley of the Ashes' with its foul river; Nick's leaving a country of wide lawns and friendly trees at the start of the novel before moving to West Egg and returning at the end of the novel; Nick's vision of the natural island seen by the early Dutch sailors – 'the fresh green breast of the new world' which ends the novel
- nature, from an eco-critical viewpoint, as victim of humankind's awful industrial power, as seen in *Salesman*, *Tess*, *The Great Gatsby*
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

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

- the aspect of cruelty seen in the natural world which turns on human beings
- the aspect of promise and hope offered by the natural world which is then dashed
- the aspect of tragic decline that is set up by the way that writers use nature to chart the fall of the tragic heroes
- etc.

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

With respect to significance of contexts students might focus on:

- the context of nature as seen in how it is set against the city or the court
- the context of religion in relation to the Garden of Eden
- the context of growth and seasonal change and how nature continues regardless of the individual misery of tragic figures
- the context of power and the way that nature exerts its own relentless power
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

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

- structural issues relating to where nature is referred to in the texts
- the use of contrast where nature is set up against the city and the court
- the use of nature as settings for tragic events
- the use of natural imagery
- the descriptive language used to present nature
- the use of narrators to influence readers on the value placed on nature
- etc.

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

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

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

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

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