



A-level ENGLISH LITERATURE B 7717/1A

Paper 1A Literary genres: Aspects of tragedy

Mark scheme

June 2024

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.

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)

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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
Text		Toolbar Tooltip: Needing textual support		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.

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Mark	AO	Typical features	How to arrive at mark
Band 5 Perceptive/Assured 21–25 marks <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 	
Band 4 Coherent/Thorough 16–20 marks <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 	

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<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>	

0 1

Othello – William Shakespeare

Read the extract below and then answer the question.

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

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

[25 marks]

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

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

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

Please refer to pages 4–8.

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 from Desdemona's private despairing musing on Othello's abuse of her to the discussion between Emilia, Iago and Desdemona about the nature of his abuse and what has led to Othello's jealousy; Emilia's ironic touching on the truth when she claims that someone has 'devised this slander', a similar 'squire' who informed Iago that she had slept with Othello
- contextualisation: just before the extract, Othello's being angry with Desdemona, accusing her of committing adultery and then exiting, Emilia's failed attempt to comfort Desdemona; Desdemona's sending Emilia to fetch Iago; following the extract, Desdemona's appeal to Iago on what she should do to win back Othello's love; Iago's deceitful 'consolation' that it is only state affairs that trouble Othello; the exit of Desdemona and Emilia and entrance of Roderigo
- the sadness and despair of Desdemona as tragic victim
- Desdemona's weeping on stage
- her belief that fortune is against her
- her goodness which is shown in her wanting heaven to pardon whoever has misinformed Othello
- Emilia's noble defence of her mistress and anger on her behalf
- Iago's feigned innocence
- his gloating at the success he has wrought
- the irony of Emilia's light-bulb moment when she thinks that some 'eternal villain' must have devised the slander
- her wanting the villain to rot in hell

- her inability to deduce that the unknown villain is her husband
- Iago's momentary discomfort as Emilia edges towards the truth
- his abuse of her
- the irony of Emilia's referring to the 'supposed' adultery of herself and Othello and Iago's apparent believing it
- Iago's play-acting and double-dealing
- his cruelty to the innocent Desdemona
- the consequences of Othello's savage and jealous verbal attack on Desdemona
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

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

- tragic innocence as seen in Desdemona as a victim
- tragic villainy as seen in Iago's subterfuge
- the counterbalance to evil as seen in Emilia's courage and support of Desdemona
- the aspect of chaos as seen in the breaking up of Desdemona and Othello's marriage
- 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 marriage context as seen in the relationships between Desdemona and Othello and Emilia and Iago
- the context of the affections as seen in Desdemona's weeping and Emilia's anger
- the moral context of deception as seen in Iago's feigned innocence
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

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

- Desdemona's short soliloquy revealing her despair
- Emilia's entrance with Iago and Desdemona's laying bare her emotions
- her weeping on stage and Iago's consoling her
- the friction between Emilia and Iago as she gets near to the truth
- the focus on the word 'whore' and Desdemona's being unable to say the word
- the use of questions for different purposes: Desdemona trying to make sense of what has happened, Iago's finding out how far his plan has advanced in his absence, Emilia's rhetorical questions as she expresses her outrage
- the contrast in the language of Desdemona and Emilia (Desdemona's using words like 'babes', 'gentle', 'child'; Emilia's more aggressive word choices and imagery – 'villainous knave', 'scurvy fellow', 'cogging, cozening slave', 'a halter pardon him', 'hell gnaw his bones')
- 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.

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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, a scene on its own (1:3) coupled with the beginning of 1:4; 1:3 begins with Gonerill's entrance with Oswald in her palace asking about Lear's reprimand of one of her servants; moving to her instructing Oswald to further disrespect Lear; her growing anger with her father; Oswald's saying that Lear is approaching; Gonerill's plan to offend her father so that he leaves and goes to Regan; her declaration that Lear as an old man must be checked; her telling Oswald that she will write to Regan to tell her what is happening; 1:4 – Kent's soliloquy explaining his disguise and his wanting to serve Lear; the entrance of Lear who has returned from hunting wanting his dinner; the exit of an obedient knight; Lear's meeting with the disguised Kent whom he does not recognise, Kent's telling him that he wants to serve him
- contextualisation: a time jump from when the audience last saw Gonerill in Act 1:1 when she was seen conspiring with her sister after the debacle of the love test and the banishment of Cordelia and Kent; the scene switch in Act 1:2 to the sub-plot and Edmund's parallel plot to inherit his father's land – a scene which allows time for Gonerill (and Kent) to move from Lear's court to her palace and where Lear has time to annoy her with his one hundred knights; following the extract from 1:4, further explanation from Kent about his wanting to serve Lear and then Lear's confrontation with Oswald who carries out Gonerill's command to 'put on what weary negligence' he pleases
- Gonerill's villainy – here and elsewhere, the links with the first scene and with the later scene when she strips him of his knights and then casts him out on the heath
- her decision to disrespect her father which links with later
- her growing emotion and anger towards him

- her plottings with Oswald and her sister which are linked to later events
- Gonerill's nastiness, calculation and growing power and authority
- Gonerill's understanding of her father whom she knows still wants control and power though he has given it away
- the development of Gonerill's philosophy which coincides with Edmund's belief that the younger rise when the old fall
- her control of Oswald and the terrible disrespect that she is about to unleash by instructing her servants to abuse her father
- Gonerill's familiarity with Oswald, her telling him more than he should know
- the consequences of Lear's having given up his power and home to live with a daughter that he misjudged
- the tragic division between the old and young
- the division between fathers and daughters
- Gonerill's plotting with Regan which shows the uniting of the evil forces
- the setting of Gonerill's palace showing not only Lear's movement there after the first scene but also his now being a dependent with no land or place of his own
- Oswald's ready agreement to carry out Gonerill's wishes
- Lear's unruly behaviour with his knights who according to Gonerill 'grow riotous'
- Lear's still trying to hold on to power – his striking of Gonerill's gentleman
- the audience's anticipation of conflict of which Lear is ignorant – at present he is out hunting with his knights
- visual evidence of Lear's terrible misjudgement of his daughters when he gave them land and power
- the sense of tragic inevitability
- sympathy for Lear from the audience
- the disguise of Kent
- his loyalty to Lear, a clear counterpoint to Oswald's disloyalty to Lear, but loyalty to Gonerill
- the knights who are loyal to Lear and obedient – there being no evidence on stage of riotousness
- Lear's calm before the storm of Gonerill's household turning against 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 villainy as seen in Gonerill's plotting
- the aspect of division as seen in Gonerill's plan to upset her father
- the aspect of conflict as seen in Gonerill's anger and her wanting a confrontation with her father
- 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 home and what it means in terms of hostess and guest
- the context of family as seen in Gonerill's lack of love for her father
- the context of power as seen in how Gonerill commands Oswald and in her wanting complete power over her father
- the context of master and servants as seen here with Gonerill's expecting loyalty from Oswald but her wanting to upturn normal master/servant relations to Lear; Oswald's being instructed to tell all her servants to disrespect her father set against Kent's professed desire to show loyalty to 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 setting of Gonerill's palace which gives her a power base
- the entrance of Gonerill with Oswald which shows their familiarity
- the conversation between Oswald and Gonerill reflecting the balance of power in the master/servant relationship but also her disrespect for her father given that she tells her servant her feelings and thoughts
- the aggressive language that Gonerill uses ('chiding', 'by day and night he wrongs me', 'flashes into one gross crime or another')
- the use of exclamatories and short statement sentences ('I'll not endure it', 'Say I am sick', 'Idle old man,/That still would manage those authorities/That he hath given away!')
- the sequence of instructions to Oswald
- the repetition of 'old'
- the use of insulting terms when speaking of Lear – 'fools', 'babes'
- the exeunt of Gonerill and Oswald
- the entrance of Kent in disguise (possibly his shaving off his beard)
- his soliloquy to explain to the audience what he is doing and why
- Lear's entrance with his knights
- the use of prose for the friendly exchange between Lear and Kent
- Kent's blunt language
- 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
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Othello – William Shakespeare

‘Othello is a tragic lover undone more by the intensity of his love than by the plotting of Iago.’

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:

- the strength of the love Othello feels for Desdemona, an intensity which stops his breath and which makes him vulnerable
- the weak foundations of the intense love Othello feels – Desdemona loves him for the dangers he has passed and he loves her because she pities him – which leave him open to insecurity
- the fact that Othello’s love is all-consuming leading to his loss of judgement
- his love being selfish and self-centred thereby limiting his vision
- his loving an idea rather than the woman Desdemona is (she is the perfect chrysolite, her skin is smooth as monumental alabaster) which leads to his not being grounded
- his wonder that Desdemona could actually love him which opens up his insecurity
- his lack of trust in the woman he loves leading to his undoing
- his unwillingness to listen to her after they get to Cyprus
- the way that jealous love so quickly engulfs him
- the destructive nature of his love
- his possessiveness in terms of love
- the importance to him of the handkerchief that he gifts to Desdemona with its magical qualities which is a symbol of his love for her and which, when lost, drives him mad
- his fear that he has been cuckolded and laughed at which enrages him
- his obsessive and destructive love which makes him unable to listen to Emilia who vouches for Desdemona’s honesty
- his violence in relation to love
- his decision to destroy Desdemona because he believes he cannot have her to himself
- his perverted idea that he must kill her to save her from betraying more men
- his bizarre belief that he has the power to decide what happens to her soul
- his strange justification that he is one who loved not wisely but too well

- the idea that he loves himself more intensely than Desdemona
- etc.

Some students might consider:

- that Iago deliberately sets out to destroy the love between Othello and Desdemona
- that Iago uses the deep love that Othello has for Desdemona to destroy the General altogether
- that Iago sees the effects of the intensity of love between Othello and Desdemona even though he doesn't understand it
- that Iago is a clever and duplicitous adversary
- that Iago knows the power of sexual jealousy and pours poison into Othello's ear
- that Iago's plot is complex and draws upon a number of Othello's weak points – his pride, his arrogance, his trust, his being enfeathered to Desdemona
- that Othello is driven to madness by Iago, and not by Desdemona
- that Iago's machinations are wide-ranging and beyond the scope of Othello to understand
- that Othello's love is not destructive as, until Iago begins his scheming, he respects Desdemona and treats her as an equal
- that his intense love does not entirely undo him since he has faith in her when he asks that she gives an account of their love to the Senate
- that he listens to her when she asks to go to war with him and that he is measured in his response
- that he listens to her when she is pleading for Cassio and promises to consider reinstating him because he will deny her nothing
- that he does not succumb to Iago's insinuations about his wife easily
- that he asks for ocular proof that she has been unfaithful
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

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

- the tragic aspect of the protagonist's being undone as seen in the destruction of Othello's love
- the aspect of tragic villainy as seen in the part played by Iago in the destruction of Othello as tragic lover
- the aspect of intensity of feeling as shown in the depth of Othello's passion
- the aspect of plotting as seen in the methods that Iago employs
- 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 romantic context as seen in the trajectory of the play as a love story and the depth of feelings in relation to love
- the gender context as seen in the way that Othello has strong convictions about what it is to be a man and what is expected of a woman
- the context of the affections as seen in the jealous love that Othello feels
- 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 Othello displays his love in the play's tragic trajectory
- dramatic actions relating to love, for example his kissing Desdemona when they arrive in Cyprus, his being unable to catch his breath, his violence towards her in public, his strangling her
- the settings where Othello's love for Desdemona is displayed, eg before the citadel, on the quayside, in their bedroom
- entrances and exits in relation to their love
- the language Othello uses to address or refer to Desdemona
- the exotic and bestial imagery he uses to show the intensity of his love
- the contrast of Othello's language with Desdemona's and with Iago's
- etc.

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

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

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

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

Accept any valid 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

‘Iago’s ability to adapt his skills to ensnare his various victims is as impressive as it is terrifying.’

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:

- his many disguises and shapeshifting which intrigue and mesmerise the audience
- his adapting himself to suit the intellectual and societal positions of his victims
- Iago’s skilful manipulation of Othello, while playing the part of his trusted subordinate, where he carefully orchestrates Othello’s entering the scene just as Cassio leaves Desdemona
- his use of innuendo and suggestion as he insinuates himself into Othello’s mind with ‘Ha, I like not that’
- his use of repetition and controlled language to waken Othello’s interest and then to ignite his jealousy
- his ability to directly lie when it is necessary – when Othello demands ocular proof he provides the story about his dream
- his pretending he is Othello’s best friend, one who is honest, one who loves him and is dutiful
- Iago’s manipulation of Cassio where he pretends to be the bluff soldier, the man’s man and fellow drinker, the good friend and counsellor
- his use of bawdy when he speaks to Cassio about Bianca making Othello think it is about Desdemona
- Iago’s manipulation of Desdemona when he acts as a father figure, consoling her and giving advice
- Iago’s effortless manipulation of Roderigo where he lies and cajoles, preying on Roderigo’s gullibility; where he uses Roderigo’s infatuation with Desdemona and his pride to inveigle him, extort money and use him in his plot
- Iago’s manipulation of the racist Brabantio where he uses obscene and racist language to stir the emotions of the old man in order to cause trouble to Othello
- Iago’s manipulation of Emilia where he uses her love for him to steal the handkerchief so that he can use it in his plot against Othello

- Iago being impressive in the way he draws the audience into his plans
- his ability to act and think spontaneously
- his use of humour
- his abuse of and subversions of language, for example his being 'honest'
- the quality of his mind at work, thinking on the spot, adapting as he goes along
- the way Iago's mind works quickly especially when he is under pressure
- the different disguises he uses which are theatrical
- the way that he can switch roles from one character to another seamlessly – mesmerising the audience
- etc.

Some students might consider:

- his being a skilful manipulator but one that is terrifying in the way he uses different skills to weaken others and make them unhappy
- his quick thinking in changing his strategy depending on who he is abusing which is horrible to watch
- his being an opportunist, rather than skilful, one who preys on his victims' weaknesses
- his not being impressive, but terrifying, since his evil leads to Othello murdering his innocent wife, Roderigo attempting to murder Cassio, Cassio's loss of reputation and Emilia's betrayal of Desdemona
- his being misogynistic and cruel in his treatment of his wife which is terrifying to witness
- his destruction of love which renders him satanic and frightening
- his murdering Emilia and Roderigo making him repellent
- his ensnaring the soul of Othello making him a sadistic torturer which is terrifying in that the audience is helpless
- his being cold and empty, devoid of humanity which is hardly impressive at all
- his depravity which is chilling to observe
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

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

- the tragic aspect of villainy as seen in Iago as a manipulator
- the aspect of tragic victims as seen in those he manipulates
- the tragic aspect of power as seen in the way he uses his intellect to ensnare others
- 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 way Iago adapts his methods according to whether he is manipulating men or women
- the social context as seen in the ways that Iago adapts his methods depending on the status of those he is manipulating
- the context of religion and how Iago upturns traditional Christian concepts and sets himself up as an alternative force
- 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 Iago manipulates other characters and how he swiftly changes his tactics
- the use of contrast as seen when Iago adapts his skills according to circumstances
- dramatic actions relating to how Iago ensnares others, for example standing in the shadows when he calls up Brabantio, kneeling with Othello in a false display of loyalty
- dramatic actions taken by the characters who are subject to Iago's control, for example Brabantio's being roused from bed, Othello's falling into a trance, Desdemona's weeping
- entrances and exits involving Iago in relation to when he is inveigling others
- the language he uses in his playacting
- the language used by those who are sucked into his power
- settings associated with Iago when he is manipulating others
- imagery he uses about others or about himself or the language used by others to describe 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 5

King Lear – William Shakespeare

‘In *King Lear*, Britain is itself a victim: a divided country that is damaged beyond repair.’

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 Britain is a ravaged country, a ‘gored state’, initially irresponsibly governed – and then divided and abandoned – by a selfish and thoughtless king
- that Britain, under the rule of Lear’s successors, is taken to the brink of civil war, leaving it open to invasion by a foreign power
- that the desire to possess the land of Britain motivates Edmund, Gonerill and Regan and leads to internecine squabbles
- that Lear’s division of the kingdom in the opening scene is the beginning of the terrible things that happen to the country
- that if the head of state is irresponsible, careless and narcissistic, then the country he rules will suffer
- that the opening words of the play, spoken by Kent and Gloucester, are about division and that the play ends with Britain as a wasteland
- that division in this play is seen initially as unsettling and dangerous and later as catastrophic
- that Lear, ironically, calls his personal and selfish decision to break up the country his ‘darker purpose’
- the irony of Lear’s saying that he intends to break up the kingdom so that ‘future strife/May be prevented now’
- that on a whim and in a rash act of temper he can change his intended division from a three-way split to a two-way split after his altercation with Cordelia
- that Lear’s judgement of bequeathing his country to Gonerill and Regan is astoundingly bad
- that in banishing Cordelia and agreeing to her marriage to France, he is opening up the kingdom to bad international relations and foreign attack (France leaves in a fit of ‘choler’)
- that Gloucester sees the consequences of the division – and the broken and damaged kingdom - in his prophecy about disquiet (‘love cools, friendship falls off, brothers divide. In cities mutinies; in countries, discord; in palaces, treason’)

- that as early as Act 2:1 there are rumours of 'likely wars 'twixt the Dukes of Cornwall and Albany'
- that the country under the powers of Gonerill and Regan is corrupt, where cruelty abounds and where justice is absent
- that despite a seeming alliance between Gonerill and Regan, peace is fragile and soon erupts into plotting against each other
- that their dispute is welcomed by the opportunist Edmund who plans no less than all in his wanting to take control of the kingdom
- that on the heath Lear refers to the poor naked wretches who have long suffered under Lear's rule and who continue to suffer
- that he also begins to understand that authority privileges the wealthy whereas the naked beggars always suffer
- the suffering of both rich and poor: all of Britain's citizens are affected
- that Britain, while under threat of a civil war, is then attacked by a foreign power
- that although Britain defeats France, it is left a wretched country that no-one wants to rule
- the last words of the play signifying hopelessness
- the question of division from a post-Brexit position, or a post-Covid-19 position
- etc.

Some students might consider:

- that although the country suffers, the suffering is not relentless and that there are good forces operating amongst the chaos which provide hope – for example, the love for Lear of the Fool and Kent, the positive influences of Cordelia and Edgar, the selflessness
- that Lear's learning on the heath (and Edgar's as Poor Tom) could be the beginnings of a better, healthier country
- that at the end of the play, the country is cleansed of all the evil elements – Gonerill, Regan, Cornwall, Oswald and Edmund
- that the Christian ideology that runs through the play promises a better future for the country
- that Albany is a survivor (with his name, deriving from Albion), suggesting that the country has also survived and has not been irreparably damaged
- that Edgar is a positive force and his survival – and learning – suggests that the country is in safe hands and is not irreparably damaged
- the last words of the play signifying hope
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

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

- the aspect of tragic victims as seen in the fate of the country
- the aspect of damage as seen in the divisions and wars that ravage the country
- the aspect of pessimism as seen in the irreparable damage to the country
- 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 war as seen in the invasion by France
- the context of social class as seen in the poverty of the poor naked wretches
- the context of power as seen in Lear's conferring his power onto his two evil daughters
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

With respect to dramatic method students might focus on:

- the play's setting of Britain, the map of the kingdom on stage in the first Act, signifying its importance
- structural issues relating to what befalls the country of Britain
- structural issues relating to when characters express thoughts and feelings about the state of the country
- actions taken on the soil of the country, for example the court setting for the division of the kingdom, the casting out of Lear on the heath, the battle at Dover
- the battles that occur with appropriate sounds, for example the alarums when the English forces fight the French, the trumpet call for Edgar's challenge to Edmund in arm-to-arm combat
- the visual sight of bodies on stage at the end to show the broken kingdom
- his use of prose or verse in relation to comments made about the country
- the language used by characters talking about the country
- 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

Explore the significance of 'nothing' to the tragedy of *King Lear*.

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

[25 marks]

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

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

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

Please refer to pages 4–8.

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:

- Cordelia's use of 'Nothing' during the love-test to account for her feelings for her father which triggers Lear's rage and her banishment
- the way that her use of the word is echoed by Lear, first in jest and then in deadly seriousness, showing the changing relationship between them
- the irony of the word used by Cordelia which could be said to mean 'everything' in terms of her love for her father
- Burgundy's asking Lear what he will give if he marries Cordelia and Lear's saying 'Nothing'
- Lear's banishment of Cordelia and France's willingness to take the fairest Cordelia who has nothing
- Lear's insistence that Cordelia will leave with nothing – 'Without our grace, our love, our benison'
- the way that the subsequent actions of Gonerill and Regan show that they meant nothing when they promised everything
- the parallel way that the word 'nothing' also sets the sub-plot in motion (when Gloucester asks Edmund what he is reading and he says 'Nothing')
- Edgar's being forced to flee for his life with 'nothing'
- his name being nothing – 'Poor Turlygod! Poor Tom!/That's something yet; Edgar I nothing am'
- his living on the heath as Poor Tom with nothing, like the poor naked wretches of Lear's prayer
- the Fool's jokes and jests which draw attention to the word nothing and Lear's having nothing now that he has given away his power
- the way the word used by the Fool links him with Cordelia
- Lear's ambiguous reply 'Nothing can be made of nothing'
- the way that Gonerill and Regan reduce the number of knights that Lear can have ('What need one')
- the way that 'nothing' or zero is part of the sequence of numbers and values in this play, triggered by Lear's asking his daughters how much they love him

- Kent's calling Oswald 'nothing' as an insult
- the way that only when Lear, Gloucester and Edgar have 'nothing' do they begin to see and learn
- that the word nothing is used less in the second half of the play but that the concept evolves to naught, anything, everything
- the link between nothing and nihilism
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

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

- the aspects of emptiness and nihilism suggested by the word nothing
- the tragic aspect of conflict as seen in the main plot and sub-plot after the use of the word nothing
- the aspect of the tragic fall as seen in Lear's descent from King to a wretch with nothing
- 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 monetary value/economics as seen in the way the word nothing is associated with having and not having
- the context of social class as seen in those who have robes and furred gowns and those who have nothing to cover their bodies
- the context of power as seen in the way that power shifts continually leaving those without power with nothing
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

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

- structural issues relating to when the word nothing is used in the play – it being used 34 times overall and 18 times in the first act
- where the word is used in speeches or exchanges between characters, for example at the end of Edgar's soliloquy, 'Edgar I nothing am', at the start of Lear's exchange with Cordelia
- the parallels between the main plot and sub-plot in relation to the word nothing
- actions taken by characters as a result of the word nothing – Cordelia's banishment, Lear's being cast out onto the heath, Kent's fighting with Oswald, Edgar's taking on the disguise of Poor Tom
- the different settings where the word is used with dramatic force, for example the court in Act 1:1, Edgar's taking refuge 'by the happy hollow of a tree'
- the use of prose or verse in relation to when characters use the word
- the way that the Fool uses the word for humour and in song
- the use of the word in parallel sequences and how it is repeated
- the use of irony in relation to the word nothing
- the link with other words of value
- 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

'In tragic texts, although happiness never lasts, its joy and intensity have enduring value.'

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 happiness in the past when he is optimistic and cheerful with his family, bonding with his sons while car washing, hopeful for Biff's career; Willy's happiness in his alternative world – his conversations with Ben, whom he adores, who 'walked into the jungle and [came] out at the age of twenty-one and he was rich'; his creation of an alternative world where he is like Dave Singleman and much liked himself; his dream where he is popular and a financial success – about which he boasts; his happiness in believing that Biff will follow in his footsteps; Biff's happiness at his moment of realisation about who he is, wanting to work outdoors and on a ranch; Happy's blind belief that he is happy serving social expectations, embodying the American Dream; his happiness in his insatiable sex drive; Willy's happiness having an enduring value because of what might have been, because of the extraordinary nature of his hope; Biff's happiness which is not obliterated because there is hope beyond the story that he will find and pursue the right dream, which has a lasting value for the audience
- Richard's happiness at the start of the play when he has power to order the adversaries Bolingbroke and Mowbray to throw down their gages and attend the Coventry lists; his commanding them to lay down their spears and passing the judgement of banishment on them; his friendly camaraderie with his favourites when he is happily relaxed; his cheerful decision to go to war to gain money to maintain his extravagant lifestyle; his happiness at the death of Gaunt when he can confiscate his wealth; his happiness in Act 3:2 when he returns from Ireland and on the coast of Wales says he weeps for joy to stand on his kingdom one again; Bolingbroke's happiness when he returns from exile when he is praised and welcomed by the common people; the moments of happiness, although fleeting, having an enduring value because of what could have been and what is then lost by the ensuing tragedy
- the happiness of the knight in the backstory when he is in a reverie with the faery child – a happiness which Keats suggests was beautiful despite the knight's suffering at its loss; the happiness of the romantic love of Isabella and Lorenzo which is presented as magical, the stuff of legend; the happiness of Lamia and Lycius in their palace of love before they confront reality, a happiness which Keats suggests is beautiful and extraordinary because it is passionate and total even though it is doomed

- the happiness of Cuchulain when he is enjoying the company and attention of his young lover at the start of the poem which is set against her inability to comfort him after the fight and death of his son; the happiness of Tithonus in the backstory when he luxuriates in his passion with Eos, believing that love to be immortal – suggested by Tennyson to be particularly valuable because of his withered state in the narrative present; the happiness which the old Tithonus imagines when he contemplates the decaying woods and the ‘happy men’ who have the power to die – happiness which has value because it is natural and free of the hubris of the young Tithonus who asked for immortality; the implied happiness of all tragic heroes in The Extract from *The Monk’s Tale* who begin their lives in prosperity before falling into misery – valuable because of what is lost
- the happiness of Tess at the start of the novel when she is innocently dancing in the May sunshine before the catalogue of disasters that befall her – which Hardy sets up as a perfect time of innocent bliss; her happiness at Talbothays when nature is lush and beautiful and where she falls in love with Angel – especially valuable in the light of what happens after her marriage to him
- the happiness of Gatsby in the backstory when he was first enchanted by Daisy Fay, when the moonlight promised romantic dreams and awakened longings – seen as valuable in its Keatsian intensity; the happiness of Gatsby when he is reunited with Daisy and she seems to reciprocate feelings of love, when Gatsby loses contact with reality – momentarily, a time which is especially precious because of the nightmare that later descends upon him
- etc.

Some students might consider:

- Willy’s not being happy at all since he is so deluded and the happiness of his dreams being an illusion and therefore of no value; Happy’s blind belief that he is happy serving social expectations, embodying the American Dream, a state from which he does not depart; his happiness in his insatiable sex drive which does not diminish
- Richard’s happiness with his favourites having no beauty because he is acting irresponsibly and causing damage to his country; his happiness at returning to Wales after the Irish wars being overdone and theatrical, not at all valuable in the light of what is happening to the country; Bolingbroke’s happiness being obliterated by his crimes which follow – his usurpation of Richard, his sanctioning his murder and the heavy guilt that he will forever feel
- the happiness that Isabella experiences as she cradles the basil pot in which is buried the severed head of Lorenzo – it having no value since it is macabre and crazy; the happiness of Porphyro when he enters into Madeline’s dream having no value when set against Madeline’s disappointment with reality; Lycius’ happiness when he is with the enchantress Lamia being completely obliterated by his death when he realises that she is a demon
- the momentary happiness of Miss Gee when she dreams she is the Queen of France having no value since her dream soon turns into a nightmare and her life thereafter becomes more depressing; the momentary happiness of the Nurse in *Death in Leamington* with her ‘chintzy, chintzy cheeriness’ since it is misplaced given the old lady lies dead and unnoticed, the cheerfulness being grimly ironic; the happiness of Tithonus in the narrative past having no value since it led to his foolish request for immortality and his misery in the present obliterating what he once felt – seen in his tears
- the little happiness that Tess experiences being entirely obliterated because of the tragic sequence of events that befall her, the happiness of the May dance being shrouded by what might have been and the happiness at Talbothays having the darkness of her past at its centre along with the darkness of Angel’s not seeing her as a real woman but as the incarnation of a deity
- Gatsby’s happiness being always illusory and founded on a fairy’s wing, it having no lasting value because of the criminal world that he inhabits and because of Daisy’s vacuousness
- etc.

Some students might legitimately argue that although happiness passes it *is* obliterated by the tragic events that follow; some might argue that the happiness experienced is not intense and beautiful but

always illusory. The ‘lasting value’ can be discussed in terms of the characters within the texts or in terms of audiences and readers.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

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

- the aspect of happiness seen in the fortune of the tragic hero who moves from prosperity to misery
- the aspect of obliteration of happiness as a result of tragic events and experiences
- the aspect of tragic figures experiencing intense emotions which make them extraordinary
- 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 love as seen in the romantic happiness of Tess, Cuchulain, Lamia and Gatsby
- the context of power as seen in the happiness that comes from Richard’s position as a king
- the psychological context as seen in the delusions of Willy as he constructs an alternate happy world in his memory
- 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 happiness occurs in the texts
- the voices that are used to speak of the happiness – characters within the texts and narrators
- the use of time shifts in the drama texts to show how happiness quickly passes
- the use of language to show the value of the happiness and to show its intensity and beauty
- the use of natural imagery in relation to happiness
- the use of settings where happiness occurs, for example the mythical setting of *Lamia*, the setting of Talbothays and Marlott in *Tess*
- the use of contrast to show the unhappiness that occurs when happiness has passed
- 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 comments on dramatic/authorial methods that are embedded into the argument.

0 8

Explore the significance of friends and friendship 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:

- Willy's friendship with Charley which heightens the change in Willy's fortunes – his mockery of Charley in the past, his dependency on him for money in the present; Charley as a commentator at Willy's funeral – a man who knows the qualities of his friend; Charley as a contrast to Willy, caring for him while Willy is self-obsessed; the lack of other 'friends' at Willy's funeral showing his isolation and his delusion (he dreamed that his funeral would be packed); Biff's friendship with Bernard showing Biff's pumped up arrogance as a boy in the way he treats and mocks Bernard and how Biff's pride prevents him from reciprocating the friendship that Bernard genuinely offers
- Richard's friendship with Bushy, Bagot and Greene which is part of Richard's undoing, showing also his misjudgement; their flattery of him and encouragement in his extravagance showing Richard's vulnerability in that he is 'falsely led' by them; their failing him when he is in crisis; Bolingbroke's execution of Richard's favourites leaving Richard isolated; Aumerle's loyal friendship with Richard suggesting that Richard has some support and respect; Bolingbroke's friendship with Northumberland, who helps Bolingbroke to take the throne; Richard's prophecy that that friendship will cool
- Lycius' friendship with Apollonius who is like a father to him, caring about his education and wellbeing; his being a threat to Lamia since she suspects that Apollonius might see through her and remove her spell over Lycius; the role of Apollonius in revealing the truth of her identity and in so doing ending the life of his friend; the other student friends of Lycius who Lycius wants to invite to his wedding; Lycius' wanting to display the beauty of his bride to them in a display of masculine pride and showing off; Porphyro's befriending Angela to enable him to carry out his plan of the seduction of Madeline; Angela's being a false friend of Madeline; the false friendship established by the brothers in *Isabella* for Lorenzo; their feigning friendship to lure him away from their sister and murder him; friendship being used here for their tragic villainy
- the 'faithful friends,/Th'associats and copartners' that Satan addresses in Extract from *Paradise Lost*, the role of the 'friends' in elevating Satan and in giving him consolation as he raises himself from the slough of despair to reign in hell; the way that the 'friends' are all in the darkness together; the friendship of Cuchulain and the Red Branch Kings who are good-time friends, happy to support

Cuchulain when he is at the height of his power; the falseness of Concubar who tries to sooth Cuchulain's grief by sending his lover to comfort him but when that fails enlists the Druids to put a spell on Cuchulain which ends his life; the superficial friendship of the Nurse for the victim of *Death in Leamington*, her false cheerfulness as she brings in the tea things, oblivious of the old woman's death, but then her quiet respect at the end; the palpable lack of friendship in *Miss Gee* emphasising Miss Gee's loneliness and the emptiness of her life, her passing by couples who do not invite her to stay

- the false friends of Tess at the fair when she is in Trantridge, their part in encouraging her to go out with them and their abandonment of her, leaving her to be preyed upon by Alec D'Urberville; her friends at Talbothays, Izzy, Marian and Retty who share her love for Angel Clare; their jealousy of Tess when Angel shows his preference for her; their joint suffering at Flintcomb-Ash; their all being victims of the weather and the cruelty of men
- Gatsby's friendship with Nick which is enduring and which leads to Nick writing his novel to celebrate Gatsby's life; Nick's genuine love for Gatsby, his valuing him as a friend, caring about him while Gatsby is alive and trying to salvage something after his death; Gatsby's befriending Nick to serve his purpose to see Daisy; his wanting to buy Nick's cooperation; Nick's uneasy friendship with Tom Buchanan who bullies him; Nick's settling scores at the end when he confronts Tom about 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 the worth of tragic heroes as seen in the friendships they have or have not
- the aspect of loneliness seen when characters are friendless or when friends betray
- the aspect of the tragic fall of characters whose friends cannot help their decline
- 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 friendship and its importance in providing a community and support
- the context of gender as seen in the single-sex friendships that occur in tragic texts
- the context of social class and how friendships are affected by social status
- 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 friendships occur in the texts and how they contribute to the tragedy
- dramatic actions in the plays relating to friendship, for example Charley's playing cards with Willy, Bushy's coming to tell Richard of Gaunt's illness
- the use of voices, including narrators, in the establishing and destruction of friendships
- the use of contrast where friendships are set up, for example in the past and present worlds of *Salesman*, in the striking differences between Nick and Gatsby
- the use of settings where friendships flourish or otherwise, for example the natural world of Talbothays, the Valley of the Ashes where Tom displays false friendship for Wilson
- the language used to present friendships

- the way that friends are addressed or referred to
- 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 comments on dramatic/authorial methods that are embedded into the argument.