



AS

English Literature B

7716/1A Paper 1A – Literary Genres: Drama: Aspects of Tragedy

Mark scheme

7716

June 2018

Version/Stage: 1.0 Final

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

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.

Further copies of this mark scheme are available from aqa.org.uk

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 comedy: 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 the texts in front of them, so although they will sometimes be able to make specific references to structural and organisational issues, at other times they will be more general.

Arriving at Marks

1. All questions are framed to address all the Assessment Objectives (AOs). Weightings are given above the generic mark scheme. Answers are marked holistically but, when deciding upon a mark in a band, examiners should bear in mind the relative weightings of the assessment objectives (see page 5) and be careful not to over/under credit a particular skill. This will be exemplified and reinforced as part of examiner training and standardisation. Examiners need to read the whole answer taking into account its strengths and weaknesses and then place it in the appropriate band.
2. Examiners should avoid making early snap judgements before the whole answer has been read. Some students begin tentatively but go on to make relevant points.
3. Examiners should be prepared to use the full mark range and not 'bunch' scripts in the middle for safety. Top marks are attainable if students could not be expected to do more in the time and under the conditions in which they are working.
4. Examiners should mark positively. Although the mark scheme provides some indicators for what 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 is not only one right answer. 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 try to remain flexible if a student introduces unusual or unorthodox ideas.
6. Examiners should remember that length and quality are not synonymous. Some brief answers may be relevant and concise. Equally, long answers may be diffuse and repetitive.
7. If answers are short or incomplete, examiners can only reward what is there and assess accordingly. Some further credit can be given to answers finished in note form.

Using the Mark Bands

8. When placing answers in mark bands, examiners need to look closely at the descriptors and the detailed generic mark bands on page 7. 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 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 relevant debate or constructed a relevant argument?
- has the student referred to different parts of the text to support their views?
- has the student referred to the author'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.

Annotation

14. Examiners should remember that annotation is directed solely to senior examiners.
15. 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.
16. Please remember that scripts can go back to students, so although your audience is a senior examiner, you must express your views temperately.
17. Use the Model Marked Script for guidance.

The assessment objectives and their significance

18. 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.

The AOs are as follows:

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations. (12%)

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts. (12%)

AO3 Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received. (24%)

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts. (24%)

AO1 Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression. (28%)

It is important to remember that these students are 16 to 17 years old, so we are judging their skills at a midway point in Key Stage 5.

Weightings for each question are as follows:

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

Mark	AO	Typical features	How to arrive at mark
Band 5 Perceptive/Assured 21-25 marks 'Perception' is demonstrated when students are showing the depth of their understanding and responding sensitively to the texts and task. 'Assuredness' is shown when students write with confidence and conviction.	AO5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perceptive and confident engagement with the debate set up in the task 	This band is characterised by perceptive and assured work which shows confidence, sharpness of mind and sophistication in relation to the task. At the top of the band students are consistently assured and will demonstrate sensitivity and perception across all five assessment objectives in the course of their response. At the bottom of the band there will be coherence and accuracy with some perception but with less consistency and evenness.
	AO4	<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 'Coherence' is shown when students are logical and consistent in their arguments in relation to the task. They hold their ideas together in an intelligible way. 'Thoroughness' is shown when students write carefully, precisely and accurately.	AO5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> thorough engagement with the debate set up in the task 	This band is characterised by coherent and thorough work where ideas are linked together in a focused and purposeful way in relation to the task. At the top of the band students will demonstrate a fully coherent and thorough argument across all five assessment objectives in the course of their response. At the bottom of the band ideas will be discussed in a shaped, relevant and purposeful way with a clear sense of direction, with one or two lapses in coherence and accuracy.
	AO4	<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 	

<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>	

Section A**Either**

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***Othello* – William Shakespeare**

Explore the significance of the aspects of dramatic tragedy in the following passage in relation to the play as a whole.

You should consider the following in your answer:

- the presentation of Desdemona
- the presentation of Emilia
- any other relevant aspects of dramatic tragedy

[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 will necessarily be connected with the genre through the task. Given that this is a closed book exam, textual references to support comments about the ways meanings are shaped in relation to the task will be expected to be specific and accurate.

Please refer to pages 4 – 6.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.

With respect to interpretative significances that can be found, there will be a variety of interpretations.

Some possible ideas:

- the desperate suffering of Desdemona as she contemplates the seriousness of Othello's accusations of infidelity
- the pitiable sorrow of Desdemona as she regrets the loss of Othello's love for her
- that Desdemona's idealism in determining to improve herself despite being treated badly is admirable or foolish
- Desdemona's questioning of Emilia about whether she would, as a married woman, 'do such a deed' as sleep with another man
- Emilia's boldness in speaking out to Desdemona about Othello contrasting with Desdemona's sense of loyalty to him
- that Emilia's view of a more assertive role for women in love relationships is admirable
- that Emilia's more 'down to earth' view of men highlights Desdemona's naïveté
- Emilia's upbeat assessment of how to influence the rules that affect her, 'tis a wrong in your own world and you would quickly make it right'
- the use of the song as a poignant expression of Desdemona's grief
- the contrast of this scene to the destructive development of Othello and Desdemona's relationship
- the role of Emilia here as a loyal servant and her role elsewhere in the play, eg obtaining the handkerchief, revealing Iago's treachery
- the oppressive sense of doom that pervades the extract
- etc

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts.

Focus might be on:

- the aspect of tragic victims as shown by Desdemona's choice of the love-song, her sense of Othello's anger towards her and her sense of being badly treated by him
- the aspect of tragic isolation as shown by Desdemona's going to her bedchamber
- the tragic aspect of inexorable progress towards death as shown by Desdemona's sense of foreboding, eg 'mine eyes do itch,/ Does that bode weeping?'
- aspects of domestic tragedy eg the element of marital discord between Othello and Desdemona, as shown by Desdemona in the content of her conversation with Emilia
- the use of humour to sharpen tragic suffering as seen in Emilia's response to Desdemona in this extract
- etc

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

Focus might be on:

- the social context of marriage: Desdemona's acceptance of her husband's dominance and questioning that women would 'abuse their husbands'
- the gender context: Emilia's view that women should be treated more fairly by their husbands in order to stop them learning to 'abuse their husbands'
- the context of song: the love song capturing the melancholy mood
- the psychological context: the submissiveness of Desdemona to Othello's demands; Emilia's assertiveness in striving for fair treatment
- etc

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

With respect to significance of dramatic methods in relation to the task:

Focus might be on:

- the fragmented structure of the extract linking to the distracted nature of Desdemona's thoughts as shown in Desdemona's breaking off from the song; the unusualness of this moment depicting feminine relationships in contrast to the masculine world of military and sexual prowess which dominates the play; this domestic scene contrasting with the encounter with Lodovico and Othello that precedes this extract and the plotting of Iago and Roderigo that follows in the next act
- the setting of the bedchamber which links to the isolation of Desdemona and the intimacy of the exchanges between Desdemona and Emilia, and the place where she later dies
- the fragment of the willow song linking to the dialogue immediately prior to the extract where she reaffirms her love for Othello eg 'his check, his frowns' which have 'grace and favour in them' despite the awkwardness of the dinner party with Lodovico, which has just finished as the scene begins and the parting of Othello and Desdemona – the last time they are seen on stage together before he kills her
- Desdemona's use of questions, exclamations and repetitions, which shape the conversation
- the even division of lines between Desdemona and Emilia followed by the shift to Emilia's long speech at the conclusion of the extract
- the rhetorical nature of Emilia's speech, eg the use of questions and answers, parallelisms, zeugma etc
- the use of wit by Emilia to lighten the tense, anxious mood

- the motif of the song, conveying sorrow and suffering for Desdemona in the extract and which Emilia sings at the end as she dies, lying next to Desdemona
- the finality of Desdemona's farewell that concludes the extract and this scene portentously anticipating her death scene
- etc

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:

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

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

or

0	2
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King Lear – William Shakespeare

Explore the significance of the aspects of dramatic tragedy in the following passage in relation to the play as a whole.

You should consider the following in your answer:

- the presentation of Lear
- the dramatic action of the extract
- any other relevant aspects of dramatic tragedy

[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 will necessarily be connected with the genre through the task. Given that this is a closed book exam, textual references to support comments about the ways meanings are shaped in relation to the task will be expected to be specific and accurate.

Please refer to pages 4 – 6.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.

With respect to interpretative significances that can be found, there will be a variety of interpretations.

Some possible ideas:

- Lear's holding Cordelia's body showing the poignant tenderness between father and daughter
- the futile hope of Lear about Cordelia's being alive creating sympathy
- the rage of Lear at Cordelia's death revealing his magnitude and inspiring the audience's pity
- Lear's death being cathartic to purge the suffering the audience have seen
- Lear's carrying Cordelia's body on stage showing the shocking waste of her death and contrasting with the deserved death of villainous Edmund
- the stage business of the 'looking-glass' and the feather showing Lear's continued delusion and his terrible grief at her death culminating in his own death on stage
- the resolution of death as fitting after all the excruciating suffering that Lear has caused
- the bleakness of the final scene that offers no satisfactory vision of the future after Lear's death
- Kent's attempt to inform Lear of his true identity ('your servant Kent') as being distracting to the intensity of the other action involving Lear and Cordelia
- the way other characters are spectators on the action and seem to commentate on events, eg Kent's 'All's cheerless, dark and deadly'
- etc

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts.

Focus might be on:

- the aspect of tragedies resolving in death as shown by Lear's death, and the bodies of his daughters which are all on stage

- the aspect of tragic waste as shown in Cordelia's death when Lear carries her on uttering 'Howl, howl, howl!'
- the aspect of tragic suffering as shown by Lear's torment, eg 'Why should a dog, a horse, a rat have life,/ And thou no breath at all?'
- the aspect of tragic villainy shown in the consequences of Edmund's actions and his punishment through death which is announced in the extract
- etc

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

Focus might be on:

- the context of family relationships: Lear is mourning the loss of his daughter and has retreated entirely from the role of monarch by the time he dies
- the political context of the state: the erosion of regal authority leaving the state weakened as shown by the uncertainty in deciding who should take over after Lear's death
- the production context: Shakespeare's changes to the source material to create the tragic ending, eg in Holinshed's *Chronicle* 'Leir' is restored and 'Cordeilla' survives
- the psychological context: Lear's suffering is shown through his deluded response to Cordelia's death possibly imagining her to be alive
- the gender context: the female characters having been killed off and so not being presented as a viable political alternative to masculine power in the play
- etc

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

Focus might be on:

- the location of the extract as the culmination of Lear's journey and his final moments of the play, the shocking revelation of Cordelia's death closely following the deaths of her sisters which occur shortly before this extract begins and the consequent action of Kent's 'undisguising' and the potential establishing of Edgar as ruler at the end of the play
- Lear's speeches dominating the extract to show the physical and mental suffering he has to endure and the unusual absence of a 'death speech' along with the ambiguous final utterance 'Do you see this? Look on her: look, her lips, Look there, look there!'
- the setting of Dover seemingly on the battlefield linking to the destruction of Albion culminating the 'civil strife' that is the backdrop of the play
- the brief clipped dialogue from characters other than Lear
- the use of physical actions and stage directions to present events eg Lear carrying Cordelia, his need to 'undo this button', or the request to 'Lend me a looking-glass'
- the use of tableau in presenting Lear's final scene with Cordelia contrasting with the busy activity of the previous lines
- the use of the messenger's entrance to relay the news of Edmund's death
- the use of imagery associated with suffering, torment and pain, eg 'Howl, howl, howl!', the use of exclamations, questions and imperatives in relation to the presentation of Lear

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:

- 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 authorial methods that are embedded into the argument.

Section B**Either**

0 3

***Richard II* – William Shakespeare**

Explore the view that ‘In *Richard II*, Gaunt and York display more greatness and nobility than Richard.’

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 *Richard II* through the lens of tragedy, the AOs will necessarily be connected with the genre through the task. Given that this is a closed book exam, textual references to support comments about the ways meanings are shaped in relation to the task will be expected to be specific and accurate.

Please refer to pages 4 – 6.

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 students response that matters.

Some students might consider:

- how the greatness of Gaunt’s vision of England gives him insight into Richard’s having ruined the realm
- how the wise counsel Gaunt gives to Bolingbroke when he is banished shows greatness
- how York’s stoic defence of hereditary right shows nobility in the face of Richard’s callous avarice
- how York valiantly undertakes his duty as Lord Governor to mobilise an army to defend England during Richard’s absence in Ireland
- how York’s decision to inform King Henry of Aumerle’s treachery is noble
- Richard’s ill-judged actions at the start of the play presenting him as less noble than Gaunt or York, eg his treatment of Mowbray, or his undertaking the war in Ireland
- etc

Some students might consider:

- that Gaunt’s age and frailty do not allow him to be great; that he is cowardly rather than noble in his refusal to take action over Gloucester’s death
- that York’s conduct is weak rather than great and noble when he meets Bolingbroke at Berkeley castle and accepts he is ill-prepared to fight
- that York is unable to act with greatness or nobility as Lord Governor because his allegiances are divided between Richard and Bolingbroke
- that York’s failure to defend and protect Aumerle is ignoble
- that York and Gaunt display greatness and nobility only at the start of the play: Gaunt dies in Act 2 and York becomes increasingly ineffectual
- Gaunt and York have noble status by birth and social rank, but do not always act nobly
- that Richard’s greatness and noble spirit are foregrounded in the second half of the play where his tragic stature rises

- that Richard's greatness is indisputably superior as shown when he manipulates the action to depose himself rather than allow Bolingbroke to do so
- that in Act 5 Richard appears more noble than Gaunt or York elsewhere eg Richard's realisation that he, as a king, is no greater than a beggar
- Richard's resistance to Exton in the murder scene as showing more greatness or nobility than York and Gaunt show elsewhere in the play.
- etc

Students might argue that Gaunt is great and noble but York is not, or that York is great and noble but Gaunt is not, etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts.

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

- the aspect of tragic greatness as shown in Gaunt in his confrontation with Richard in 2.1 where he highlights the shortcomings of Richard's rule
- the aspect of tragic nobility as shown in York in his steadfast belief in hereditary right, eg his defence of it to Richard in 2.1
- the aspect of tragic heroism as shown in Richard's commanding performance during the deposition scene in 4.1 eg 'Now mark me how I will undo myself:/ I give this heavy weight from off my head'
- the aspect of the tragic fall as shown in Richard's fall from greatness when he dishonourably appropriates Gaunt's estate in 2.1
- etc

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

With respect to significance of contexts in relation to the task:

Focus might be on:

- the cultural context: the role of noble lineage in determining greatness as shown by Gaunt and York carrying the 'sacred blood' of their father King Edward
- the historical context: the role of nobles in supporting the monarch as seen in York's staunch defence of Divine Right as a way to present greatness
- the production context: Shakespeare's selecting and re-working historical events to accentuate Richard's greatness, eg the encounter in 3.3 at Flint Castle which compresses the historical time scale of Holinshed's *Chronicle* and omits events documented in Froissart's *Chronicle*
- the political context: Richard's fitness to govern is the central conflict of the play; Richard's lack of greatness as monarch, despite his hereditary right is set against the noble stock of his lineage, shown in his uncles, Gaunt and York
- the psychological context: Richard's loss of political status revealing an inner greatness once he has lost the throne; Gaunt's nobleness of spirit is shown through his deeply held beliefs, eg his speech in 2.1
- etc

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts**With respect to significance of dramatic methods in relation to the task:**

Focus might be on:

- structure: the chiasmic structure of the play that presents Richard as inept and inadequate, contrasting with the noble views and actions of Gaunt and York in the first half, and then Richard rising in tragic stature later as he negotiates and performs his abdication, showing tragic greatness as his political power wanes; the early placing of Gaunt's death in Act 2; the diminishing greatness of York as Bolingbroke gains more support and power in Act 2 and as Richard becomes more noble
- the use of formal settings such as 'the base court' at Flint Castle in Act 3 or parliament in Act 4 to show the greatness of Richard, or the domestic settings of Gaunt's and York's homes to present their moral greatness or their nobility eg Gaunt's final speech being noble in its criticism of Richard
- the frequency, length and elaborateness of Richard's speeches that show his greatness at commanding an audience, eg when he addresses Bolingbroke through Northumberland at Flint Castle over the 'glory of my precious crown'
- the use of speeches or soliloquies to present greatness eg Gaunt's speech in 2.1, or York's rebuke to Bolingbroke in 2.3, or Richard's soliloquy at 5.5
- the use of motifs, symbols and images to convey greatness or nobility eg, sacred blood, the crown, 'this scept'd isle'
- etc

Given that this is a **closed book** exam references to the play 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:**

- 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 that are embedded into the argument.

or

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Death of a Salesman – Arthur Miller

Explore the view that: 'The suffering of Willy's family is as painful to watch as the suffering of Willy himself.'

Remember to include in your answer relevant comment on Miller'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 *Richard II* through the lens of tragedy, the AOs will necessarily be connected with the genre through the task. Given that this is a closed book exam, textual references to support comments about the ways meanings are shaped in relation to the task will be expected to be specific and accurate.

Please refer to pages 4 – 6.

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 students response that matters.

Some students might consider:

- the painfulness of the collective suffering of the family as they mourn round the graveside in the Requiem
- the painfulness of Linda's deeply felt sorrow at Willy's death and her inability to understand his motives as shown in her final speech eg 'Why did you do it? I search and search and I search but I can't understand it'
- Linda's urgent concern for Willy's state of mind, caused by his withdrawn, distracted, depressed behaviour that might be painful to watch
- Linda's having to 'put up' with Willy's outbursts, which causes her emotional pain eg telling her to 'shut up'
- the painfulness of Biff's disappointing waste as shown in loss of motivation and ambition, eg his flunking Maths because of Willy's infidelity
- the painfulness of Biff's low self-esteem eg when he sees himself as 'a dime a dozen' as a result of Willy's ineffective parenting
- the bittersweet painfulness of Happy's blind faith in his father's vision which the audience might think will lead to greater suffering because he hasn't learnt from his father's mistakes
- the painfulness of Happy's being ignored by his father leading to his disappointment as a child and his unpleasantly competitive nature in adulthood which alienates him from people
- etc

Some students might consider:

- watching Willy's psychological decline and eventual suicide being more painful than anything his family experience because ultimately he dies
- the abandonment Willy suffers at the restaurant by Biff and Happy is more painful to watch than events Miller presents as happening to Biff and Happy
- Willy's suffering humiliation as a result of not being able to achieve enough sales to retain his salary and then losing his job as more painful to watch
- the emotional suffering Willy experienced as a result of his absent father as more painful

- the shame he suffers when Ben’s menacing presence reminds him of missed opportunities as more painful to watch eg the invitation to go to Alaska
- etc

Some students might argue that the family’s experiences in the play are too ordinary for suffering. Some students might comment on other members of Willy’s wider family, eg his father or Ben.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts.

With respect to significance of connections to the tragic genre:

Focus might be on:

- the aspect of tragic suffering shown by Willy as he struggles to overcome his depression eg the voices he seems to hear before his final exit, ‘*[sounds, faces, voices, seem to be swarming in on him]*’; or suffering shown by Linda as she lives with Willy’s erratic moods and behaviour eg his anger at her mending the stockings
- the aspect of tragic waste as shown in Biff’s lack of achievement eg his ‘playing around with horses, twenty-eight dollars a week!’
- the aspect of tragedies resolving in death as shown by Willy’s fatal car accident
- the aspect of pity being inspired by the audience as shown by Happy’s determination at the end eg ‘I’m gonna show you and everybody else that Willy Loman did not die in vain’
- some relevant aspects of domestic tragedy such as dysfunctional family relationships as shown in the hostility between Willy and Biff in the final phase of the play eg their confrontation about the ‘rubber tube’
- etc

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

With respect to significance of contexts in relation to the task:

Focus might be on:

- the social context of family: the suffering caused by family members not being able to live up to imposed roles, eg Willy as the provider, Biff as the successful son
- the economic context: Willy’s suicide possibly leading to financial hardship for his family because the insurance will be invalidated by his suicide
- the cultural context: the dominance of conspicuous consumption in mid-C20th America creating impossible pressures to achieve a standard of living and that causes Willy to suffer and ultimately leads to his suicide
- the psychological context: the suffering caused by depression which has a harmful effect on the whole family eg Willy dies, Linda is grief-stricken, Biff’s seeming acceptance of his ‘dime a dozen’ life
- etc

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts**With respect to significance of dramatic methods in relation to the task:**

Focus might be on:

- structure: the Requiem concluding the play and its expressionistic stage directions conveying the sense of grief eg '[*sobbing more fully now, released*]'; the use of time leaps between the remembered past and the dramatic present eg the recollected ambition of going to Alaska with Ben that causes Willy suffering that is painful to watch because he hasn't achieved such wealth
- the use of settings, actual and imagined, eg the graveside, the house, the restaurant where he has dinner with his sons, the hotel room in which Biff discovers Willy with the Woman in relation to suffering that is painful to watch
- the use of different voices and dramatised conflict to present suffering that is painful to watch eg the hesitations, interruptions and exclamations in the scene where Biff discovers the Woman with Willy
- the descriptive nature of the stage directions to point up attitudes linked to suffering that is painful to watch eg Linda's 'iron repression' or her 'desperate but monotonous humming'
- etc

Given that this is a **closed book** exam references to the play 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:**

- 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 that are embedded into the argument.

or

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A Streetcar Named Desire – Tennessee Williams

Explore the view that: ‘Despite all the cruelty and suffering experienced in the play, the ending is ultimately uplifting.’

Remember to include in your answer relevant comment on Williams’ 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 *Richard II* through the lens of tragedy, the AOs will necessarily be connected with the genre through the task. Given that this is a closed book exam, textual references to support comments about the ways meanings are shaped in relation to the task will be expected to be specific and accurate.

Please refer to pages 4 – 6.

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 students response that matters.

Some students might consider:

- that Williams resists the tragic resolution of death for Blanche, and so it is uplifting that she survives rather than being ‘killed off’ which is typical for the genre
- how the birth of Stella and Stanley’s baby is looking to a new, brighter future in the narrative and this being ultimately uplifting after the cruel experiences Blanche brings with her
- the tenderness of the play’s closing image of Stella and Stanley, as being uplifting in affirming the potency of love and the strength of their relationship after the cruelty of Stanley’s earlier violence
- the richness of Blanche’s imagined world as being uplifting in its vividness enabling her to survive the unbearable cruelty she has suffered at the Kowalskis and earlier at Belle Rêve
- etc

Some students might consider:

- the unbearable cruelty of Stanley’s treatment of Blanche and the viciousness of her rape as bleak and therefore not uplifting
- the dismaying treachery of Stella’s treatment of Blanche when she agrees to send her to the asylum which is not uplifting
- the turmoil of Stella in the final moments before Blanche is removed which is not uplifting
- the lasting injustice of Blanche’s not being believed about Stanley raping her and her being placed in a psychiatric institution which is not uplifting
- that the ending is uplifting in terms of outcomes for some characters but not for the audience
- etc

Some students might argue that the ending is ambiguous and so it is not uplifting nor is it finally pessimistic.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts.**With respect to significance of connections to the tragic genre:**

Focus might be on:

- the aspect of tragedy being resolved by death which Williams eschews to create a more uplifting ending as shown by Blanche's final exit with the Doctor
- the aspect of tragic endurance as shown through Stella and Stanley's love eg Stanley's consolations uttered 'soothingly' at the end of the play as he 'kneels beside her'
- the aspect of uplifting elements in tragedy as shown by the birth of Stella's baby
- the aspect of tragic isolation as shown by Blanche as she is removed from the play's world
- the aspect of tragic suffering as shown by Stella's distress at Blanche's fate eg when she 'sobs with inhuman abandon' when Blanche leaves in Scene 11
- some relevant aspects of domestic tragedy such as family dysfunction as shown in the treatment of Blanche by Stella who agrees to her being committed to a psychiatric hospital
- etc

AO3 Demonstrate understanding of the significance and the influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received.**With respect to significance of contexts in relation to the task:**

Focus might be on:

- the social context of the marriage: Stella's putting her husband before her sister creates an ending that looks to the future not the past and so is uplifting
- the gender context: the women in the world of the play who adhere to masculine rules are rewarded (Stella), those who defy socially accepted roles for females are punished (Blanche); the violence of men towards women in the play in relation to cruelty and suffering.
- the psychological context: the distressing madness of Blanche and the extreme anguish of Stella which is not uplifting
- etc

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts**With respect to significance of dramatic methods in relation to the task:**

Focus might be on:

- structure: the focus on positive events at the end of the play such as the birth of Stella's baby and the sensual reaffirmation of love by Stella and Stanley as being uplifting; the use of gaps and time shifts to obscure cruel events such as Blanche's rape to make the ending seem more uplifting; the inter-cutting of action between the card games and the dramatic action of Blanche's removal to present the forward-looking aspect of the ending, which is uplifting; the contrast between the forward-looking end and past suffering (the loss of Belle Rêve, Allan's suicide) which has shaped Blanche's life
- the use of setting: the Kowalski's small flat as a family home, freed at the end from Blanche who made it claustrophobic; the remoteness of implied settings which are linked to suffering or cruelty such as Belle Rêve or the psychiatric hospital and so diminishing the impression of cruelty or suffering
- the use of detailed stage directions to convey uplifting aspects such as the intensity of the love between Stella and Stanley eg the final image of Stanley kneeling recalls the same gesture in Scene 3 when Stella's eyes 'go blind with tenderness' towards him

- the use of speeches, entrances and exits or dramatic action to show uplifting elements eg Stanley's triumphant anticipation of his son's birth by popping open the beer bottle or getting out his silk pyjamas in Scene 10 or elements of suffering and cruelty such as Blanche hearing the bullet symbolising Allan's suicide in Scenes 6 and 9
- the use of motifs, symbols, and imagery to point up uplifting moments eg the opening of drinks, or moments of cruelty and suffering eg, the paper lantern, the Varsouviana music
- etc

Given that this is a **closed book** exam references to the play 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:

- 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 that are embedded into the argument.