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A-level  
**ENGLISH LITERATURE B**  
**7717/1A**

Paper 1A Literary genres: Aspects of tragedy

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**Mark scheme**

June 2019

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Version: 1.0 Final

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











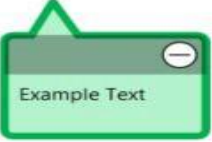




















15. Examiners should remember that annotation is directed solely to senior examiners.

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

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

**The assessment objectives and their significance**

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

Reminder: The AOs are as follows:

**AO5** Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.

**AO4** Explore connections across literary texts.

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

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

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



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

<p>Band 3 <b>Straightforward/ Relevant</b> <b>11-15 marks</b></p> <p>‘<b>Straightforward</b>’ work is shown when students make their ideas in relation to the task clearly known.</p> <p>‘<b>Relevant</b>’ 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"> <li>• straightforward engagement with the debate set up in the task</li> </ul>	<p>This band is characterised by <b>straightforward</b> and <b>relevant</b> 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 <b>straightforward</b> understanding in the course of their argument. Ideas will be developed <b>relevantly</b>.</p> <p>At the bottom of the band there will be flashes of <b>relevant</b> understanding with evidence of <b>straightforward</b> thinking.</p>
	AO4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• explores connections across literary texts arising out of generic study in a straightforward way</li> </ul>	
	AO3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• straightforward understanding of the significance of relevant contexts in relation to the task</li> <li>• relevant connections between those contexts and the genre studied</li> </ul>	
	AO2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• straightforward understanding of authorial methods in relation to the task</li> <li>• relevant engagement with how meanings are shaped by the methods used</li> </ul>	
	AO1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sensibly ordered ideas in a relevant argument in relation to the task</li> <li>• some use of literary critical concepts and terminology which are mainly appropriate; straightforward and clear expression</li> </ul>	
<p>Band 2 <b>Simple/Generalised</b> <b>6-10 marks</b></p> <p>‘<b>Simple</b>’ work is shown when students write in an unelaborated and basic way in relation to the task.</p> <p>‘<b>Generalised</b>’ work is shown when students write without regard to particular details.</p>	AO5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• simple and generalised response to the debate set up in the task</li> </ul>	<p>This band is characterised by <b>simple</b> and <b>generalised</b> work which is mainly linked to the task.</p> <p>At the top of the band students will demonstrate a basic <b>generalised</b> understanding in the course of their answer. Ideas will be developed in a <b>simple</b> way.</p> <p>At the bottom of the band there will be inconsistency, but the beginnings of a <b>simple</b> and <b>generalised</b> understanding.</p>
	AO4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• simple exploration of connections across literary texts arising out of generic study</li> </ul>	
	AO3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• simple understanding of the significance of relevant contexts in relation to the task</li> <li>• generalised connections between those contexts and the genre studied</li> </ul>	
	AO2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• simple understanding of authorial methods in relation to the task</li> <li>• generalised engagement with how meanings are shaped by the methods used</li> </ul>	
	AO1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a simple structure to the argument which may not be consistent but which does relate to the task</li> <li>• generalised use of literary critical concepts and terminology; simple expression</li> </ul>	

<p>Band 1 <b>Largely irrelevant/largely misunderstood/largely inaccurate</b> <b>1-5 marks</b></p> <p>‘<b>Largely irrelevant</b>’ work is shown when students write in an unclear way with only occasional reference to what is required by the question.</p> <p>‘<b>Largely misunderstood</b>’ and ‘<b>largely inaccurate</b>’ work is shown when knowledge of the text is insecure, hazy and often wrong.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• some vague points in relation to the task and some ideas about task and text(s)</li> <li>• the writing is likely to be unclear and incorrect; if it is accurate the content will be irrelevant</li> <li>• 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</li> </ul>	<p>This band is characterised by work which is <b>largely irrelevant</b> and <b>largely misunderstood</b> and <b>largely inaccurate</b>, 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 <b>irrelevant</b>.</p>
<p><b>0 marks</b></p>	<p>No marks for response when nothing is written or where response has no connection to the text(s) or task.</p>	

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## ***Othello* – William Shakespeare**

Read the extract below and then answer the question.

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

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

**[25 marks]**

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

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

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

Please refer to pages 4 – 7.

### **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 Othello's self condemnation after he learns about why Cassio had possession of the handkerchief ('O fool, fool, fool!'), through the further revelations<sup>12</sup> about Iago's and Roderigo's roles, to Lodovico establishing order and government by promoting Cassio; movement to the grandeur of Othello's final speech and suicide when he falls on the bed on which the murdered Desdemona and Emilia lie; Othello's kissing Desdemona as he dies; following this extract are the choric voices of Lodovico and Gratiano which are used to complete the play and signal the return to Venice
  - the tragic completion of both Othello's story and the tragic pattern
  - the completion of the love story and the domestic tragedy
  - the death of Othello and the visual reminders of the deaths of Desdemona and Emilia
  - the resolution of the tragedy with the uncovering of the final pieces of Iago's plot
  - the emerging of positives at the play's conclusion
  - Othello's role as tragic hero, his taking control at this stage of the play
  - Othello's journey from ignorance to knowledge
  - Othello's assessment of himself and readers'/audiences' judgements about its validity
  - his attempt to write his own epitaph and control future stories
  - whether he is ennobled by his speech or whether it is more of Othello's self dramatising
  - the significance of Othello's story telling – his last story told here
  - reactions from his onstage audience and the theatre audience watching the stage audience
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- the meting out of punishment – Othello’s of himself, the state’s proposed punishment of Iago
- the role of Cassio in the resolution, the hope for the future now that Cassio rules in Cyprus
- the choric roles of Lodovico and Gratiano
- the return of order and the re-establishment of the control of the Venetian state
- Iago’s being on stage, silent and alive
- etc

#### **AO4 Explore connections across literary texts**

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

- tragic resolution since this is the ending of the play
- the tragic aspect of the death of the tragic hero
- the fall of the tragic hero as seen in the final part of Othello’s story
- the idea that in tragedy positives emerge and order is restored as seen in Lodovico’s control and the promotion of Cassio
- tragic villainy as seen in the stage presence of Iago and the revelation of his plot
- 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 setting of Othello’s bedchamber and the significance of the bed
- the moral context of punishment for wrong doing as Othello exacts justice on himself and as Lodovico takes Iago away for his punishment
- the context of the affections as seen in Othello’s love for his wife, his grief for her death and regret at what he has done
- the geographical and social contexts established by the references to Venice, Cyprus and Othello’s foreign background and experiences
- etc.

#### **AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts**

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

- the concluding part of Othello’s life after he has killed his wife and learned the truth about Iago’s deceitful plot
- the contrast of the voices of Cassio, Lodovico and Othello
- the repetition of the word ‘fool’ as Othello berates himself
- Othello’s self dramatising
- Othello’s final elevated, controlled and measured speech, its building to his dramatic climactic death through an extended story
- the use and effect of exotic imagery - ‘base Indian’ who ‘threw a pearl away’, the ‘subdued eyes’ ‘unused to the melting mood’, the ‘Arabian trees’ dropping ‘their med’cinable gum’, the ‘turbaned Turk’ in ‘Aleppo’
- Othello’s attempt to write his own epitaph: ‘Of one that loved not wisely, but too well; / Of one, not easily jealous but, being wrought, / Perplexed in the extreme’, ‘Set you down this...’
- the dramatic action of Othello’s stabbing himself
- the reactions of the stage audience
- Othello’s falling on the bed on which Desdemona and Emilia lie, his kissing his wife and dying upon a kiss

- etc.

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

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

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

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

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

0	2	<b>King Lear – William Shakespeare</b>
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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 – 7.

**AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations**

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

Some possible ideas:

- the tragic trajectory of the extract with the entrance of Albany after the conspiratorial exchange between Edmund, Gonerill and Oswald where Oswald had warned of Albany’s change; Albany’s dynamic and aggressive words towards his wife (and Regan) which place him now firmly on the side of good with his heartfelt sympathy for Lear, Gonerill’s fierce retort and insult followed by criticism of him for not preparing himself for war against France; the vitriolic argument between them halted by the entrance of the Messenger bringing news of the blinding of Gloucester and Cornwall’s death; finally at the end of the extract there is Albany’s realisation of Cornwall’s evil which later leads to his expression of sympathy for Gloucester and his vow to ‘revenge Gloucester’s eyes’
- Albany’s support of Lear in calling him ‘a gracious aged man’, one who deserves reverence
- Albany’s awakening and the contrast to his passivity and ineffectual behaviour earlier in the play
- Albany as a force of goodness and hope and how this leads him to take action later and challenge Edmund, finally wanting to reinstate Lear as king
- the terrible indictment of marriage as seen in the domestic altercation full of vicious insults and accusations which come on the back of Gonerill’s flirtations with Edmund and her committing herself to him
- the prophetic nature of Albany’s words that retribution ‘will come’ and that ‘humanity will prey on itself’
- the reminders of what Gonerill and Regan have done to Lear

- the indictment of women delivered by Albany which ironically echoes what Lear says to Gonerill and Regan – and Cordelia
- Gonerill's attack on Albany's manhood
- Albany's restraint from physical violence
- the news of Cornwall's death and how this shapes future events
- the impact of the references to violence
- the reminder of the national threat of war with France and its link to the civil strife and unrest in England
- the way France's spreading his banners in a noiseless land can be perceived – France (and Cordelia) bring hope but also the threat of foreign invasion
- the complicit nature of the servants – Oswald and the Messenger who are on the side of evil in contrast to the good servant who kills Cornwall
- etc.

#### **AO4 Explore connections across literary texts**

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

- the tragic aspects of learning and courage as shown in Albany's decision to stand up against his wife and Regan
- the tragic aspect of moral growth as seen in the philosophical pronouncements of Albany
- the aspect of violence as seen in the threats of Albany, the language used by both husband and wife and the reminder of the removal of Gloucester's eyes
- the aspect of the forces of good seen in the control Albany takes and his desire to revenge the wrongs done
- 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 gender context and society's expectations of gender specific codes of behaviour of men and women
- the context of power as Albany takes control
- the context of family relationships shown here in the way that Albany argues that there are expectations of how daughters and children should behave towards their fathers
- the context of marriage and how conventional expectations are upturned by what Gonerill and Albany say to each other
- the context of justice and Albany's predictions of what will come
- etc.

#### **AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts**

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

- Oswald's exit and Albany's entrance, leaving Gonerill and Albany alone on stage
- the dramatic surprise given by Albany's changed demeanour and speech patterns; the power of his opening retort: 'O Gonerill/ You are not worth the dust which the rude wind/ Blows in your face'
- the entrance of the messenger at the end to change the direction of the drama, advance the plot and heighten the dramatic intensity of Albany's change as a contrast to Cornwall
- the confrontation between Gonerill and Albany where they match each other in insults and vicious language
- the visual contrast between good and evil as represented by Albany and Gonerill



- the structural links between this scene and other parts of the play where Albany appears, earlier weaker and later showing more control and leadership qualities
- the philosophical and metaphysical language of Albany (references to nature, wisdom and goodness, the spirits of the heavens, humanity preying on itself)
- the unusual use of the short line: 'It will come' to draw attention to Albany's profound and prophetic statement about humanity destroying itself
- the use of rhetorical questions in Albany's attack on Gonerill
- the use of violent imagery – sliver, disbranch, dislocate, tear
- the language of insult – 'tigers not daughters', 'most barbarous, most degenerate', 'vile offences', 'devil', 'fiend', 'self-covered thing', 'milk-livered man', 'moral fool', 'Marry, your manhood! Mew!'
- etc.

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

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

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

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

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

0 3

***Othello* – William Shakespeare**

Explore the significance of the military world to the tragedy of *Othello*.

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

**[25 marks]**

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

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

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

Please refer to pages 4 – 7.

**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:

- Othello as a military general, his position of power in the Venetian army giving him status as a tragic hero
- the Venetian state’s employment of mercenary soldiers to serve their ends
- Othello’s only knowing a military life of ‘battles, sieges’, the ‘flinty and steel couch of war’
- the military world which forms the back drop of many of Othello’s stories
- Desdemona’s being wooed and enchanted by Othello’s stories of war
- the ambiguous way that Othello is regarded by Venice: respected as an army leader, one who can safeguard Venetian interests and yet a Moor who is held in some contempt
- the movement from Venice to Cyprus as a direct result of the military threat to the civilised world from the Turks
- Cyprus as an isolated military outpost, a place of danger, war torn and claustrophobic
- the threat to European civilisation and Christian belief which the Turks pose
- the jealousy of Iago which arises from Othello’s overlooking him for promotion in the army
- after the fortuitous drowning of the Turkish fleet, the tragic consequences which result from garrisoned soldiers with no enemy to fight, turning on each other
- Cassio’s distress at the loss of his professional reputation as lieutenant
- the claustrophobia of the sealed military environment which means there is no escape from each other
- the defeat of Othello by the world of peace rather than the Turkish adversary
- Desdemona’s desire to go with her husband into the fighting world, becoming his ‘fair warrior’
- the contrast between the military and the domestic worlds and Othello’s inability to function in both
- the humour provided by the soldiers celebration in the drinking song which Iago instigates
- Iago’s power over Othello resulting from his self construction as the bluff and honest soldier
- Iago’s earning his reputation on the tented field

- Iago using his strategic skills to create a war in Othello's mind
- Othello's shame in terms of his military reputation
- his executing 'justice' on Desdemona and himself in line with military principles and the military code
- etc.

#### **AO4 Explore connections across literary texts**

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

- the tragic experiences of any of the characters which result from the military world
- the tragic conflict that is shown when soldiers who are not fighting in a legitimate war against a foreign enemy turn on each other
- tragic villainy as seen in Iago's plotting and behaviour which results from his being overlooked in the military world
- the tragic status of the tragic hero which is unusually based on military prowess rather than his being a king or prince
- 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 contextual setting of Cyprus as a military outpost of Venice, the stage on which the tragic events take place
- the context of power as seen by the military ranks of Othello as General, Cassio as Lieutenant and Iago as Ancient
- the context of war as seen in the Venetian fleet's being sent to Cyprus to fight the heathen Turk
- the social context as seen by the different attitudes to war by the military and civilians
- the gender context as seen in the focus on the behaviour of men who are soldiers and trained to kill
- 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 the movement of the action into the war zone of Cyprus, the setting of Venice in Act 1 and the projected and ideological return to Venice at the end of the play as a contrast
- the structural significance of Cassio's promotions at the start and end of the play and his demotion in the middle
- the military regalia and weapons, cannon shots, trumpets, military guards and presumably military uniforms for the dramatic setting
- the terms of address and titles: General, Lieutenant, the epithets used to describe Othello, 'valiant', 'warlike', noble general'
- Iago's drinking song and the soldier's banter
- the use of military language and imagery – 'skillet of my helm', 'warlike isle', 'captain's captain', 'strip you of your lieutenantry', 'power and command', 'go where thou art billeted', 'general camp/Pioners and all', 'plumed troops, and the big wars', 'neighing steed', 'shrill trump', 'spirit stirring drum', 'pride, pomp and circumstance of glorious war'
- 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
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***Othello* – William Shakespeare**

‘Othello is a misguided murderer rather than a cruel one.’

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, but as ‘significance’ relates to contextual, structural, linguistic and interpretative issues, some ideas will inevitably address more than one AO.

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

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

Please refer to pages 4 – 7.

**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:

- Othello’s being manipulated and deliberately guided/misguided by Iago to kill Desdemona
- Iago’s weaving his evil into Othello’s thoughts to make him believe that Desdemona has betrayed him and has made a mockery of him
- how Iago’s lies affect Othello’s reputation and self belief, leading him to think that the killing of Desdemona is honourable
- Othello’s shame at the thought of being cuckolded which is all consuming and determines his behaviour
- how Othello’s lack of understanding of his society leaves him vulnerable to Iago’s guiding/misguiding
- Othello’s belief that he is an honourable murderer not a cruel one
- how fortune plays a part in Othello’s being misguided, how it helps to cement his ideas about Desdemona’s loss of virtue (the loss of the handkerchief, his seeing Cassio leaving his wife, Desdemona’s guilt at losing the handkerchief which prevents her talking about it, Othello’s seeing Bianca with the handkerchief)
- how Othello does not want to kill Desdemona’s soul, how he believes that he is the agent of justice
- how he believes that he is killing Desdemona as a sacrifice
- how Othello begs Desdemona to pray showing he is not cruel
- etc.

Some students might consider:

- that murder is murder and ‘misguided’ or ‘cruel’ is in a sense irrelevant
- the horror and cruelty of Othello’s strangling of Desdemona, a tragic innocent

- the cruel act of taking her life especially given her devotion to him
- his botched killing - though he stifles her she does not immediately die
- that the murder comes after a terrifying sequence of abuse – his verbal attacks on her often in sexual terms ('perjured woman', 'strumpet'), his violent threats to 'tear her to pieces', 'chop her into messes', his striking her, his terrorising her in the murder scene – accusing her, refusing to listen to her denials, his calling her names and then his strangling her
- his anger when she does not admit her adultery, resulting in his accusing her further for making him call what he intends to do 'a murder' not 'a sacrifice'
- his lack of compassion when she begs to be allowed to live
- his delusions about what he is doing
- his killing himself not because he understands that he was wrong to kill her but because he did it *mistakenly* thinking that she desired another man (implying that if she had had an affair with Cassio, then the killing would be justified)
- his arrogance in thinking he has the right to execute justice
- his failure to understand exactly what he has done – even in his final speech he speaks of 'unlucky deeds'
- his arrogance in wanting to persuade others that he was 'wrought' by Iago and that he simply loved Desdemona 'too well'
- Othello's saying himself during the murder scene that his act is 'cruel'
- 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 hero's fall from noble general to murderer
- the aspect of victimisation seen in the murder of Desdemona
- the aspect of death as seen in the murder of Desdemona
- the aspect of villainy as seen in Iago's agency in causing Othello to be misguided
- the aspect of realisation – albeit partial - as seen in Othello's remorse and acknowledgement of the crime he has committed
- 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 marriage context which informs Othello's thinking and feelings
- the social context which informs Othello's ideas about cuckoldry
- the judicial context in which Othello operates in terms of meting out punishment on Desdemona
- the religious context which influences Othello's ideas about where Desdemona will go after death
- the moral context which informs judgements of Othello and his murdering of his wife
- the literary context of domestic tragedy
- 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 Othello's tragic fall from noble general to murderer
- the structural contrasts between Othello's behaviour in Act 1 when he avoids conflict to his decisive action to kill his wife

- the dramatic action and climactic moment of his strangling Desdemona
- Desdemona's gasping words that come during Othello's conversation with Emilia
- the setting of her bedchamber for the murder
- the altercation between Othello and Desdemona prior to her murder
- his soliloquy when he enters the bedchamber where he sets out what he thinks are justifiable actions
- the fierce responses to Othello's act after the murder and the use of emotive language– Emilia's calling him a 'devil', 'rash as fire', a 'gull' and 'dolt', 'dull Moor', 'cruel Moor'
- the commentary on Desdemona (and use of emotive language) from Emilia – 'the sweetest innocent/ That e'er did lift up eye', 'she was chaste'
- Othello's self abuse and use of diabolical imagery after the murder when he calls himself a 'cursed slave' and calls on the devils to 'whip' him, blow him in winds and roast him in sulphur
- Othello's elevated final speech and his turning the sword of justice on himself
- 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* Shakespeare presents a world where there is neither divine nor human justice.'

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, 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 other parts of the play it is also legitimate to make more general reference.

Please refer to pages 4 – 7.

**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:

- how justice seems to be irrelevant or impotent in the play
- how justicers and the accused can change places handy-dandy
- how in the storm, the gods do not find out their enemies but punish all in the topsy-turvy world
- the suffering and punishment of Lear which exceeds his wrongs
- the ending where there are only dead marches and burials to be carried out
- the shocking nature of Cordelia's death which is unpalatable and caused Tate to rewrite the ending
- the love test that Lear sets up at the start of the play which is no test at all and where justice does not prevail
- Albany's calling on the gods to defend Cordelia which is followed by the stage direction 'Enter Lear with Cordelia dead in his arms'
- Gloucester's belief that the gods kill human beings for their sport
- the way that the good and bad die with no discrimination
- Edmund's offering promotion to the guard of Lear and Cordelia to kill them
- Kent's calling on the gods to reward Gloucester's kindness only to see that in the next scene, his eyes are plucked out in a terrible trial that is no fair trial at all
- Cordelia's being banished for telling the truth in Lear's kingdom when he metes out justice
- Kent's similar fate for defending truth and honesty
- the parody of justice that Lear oversees in his madness on the heath which dissolves into nothingness
- Lear's great speeches on justice and authority
- etc.

Some students might consider:



- that there is some poetic justice in that Gonerill, Regan, Cornwall, Edmund and Oswald all die for their sins
- the trust that can be felt in Albany who says that all friends shall taste the wages of their virtue and all foes the cup of their deserving
- the ways that the deaths of Gonerill, Regan and Edmund are not mourned
- the way that Lear ultimately rewards the Fool and Cordelia with love and that he too is rewarded with love
- the way that charity sweeps through Lear after his great suffering on the heath
- the way that Edgar and his father are rewarded with knowing that each was loved by the other
- the visual overcoming of evil by goodness in the duel between Edmund and Edgar
- the survival of Edgar at the end of the play and the hope that he will bring about a new order of justice
- the Christian imagery and symbolism which suggest that divine justice will come in the next life
- etc.

#### **AO4 Explore connections across literary texts**

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

- the tragic aspect of injustice seen in the excessive punishments inflicted on Lear, Gloucester and Cordelia
- the tragic aspect of the gods who seem careless about human suffering and justice and about which there are some grim ironies when they are called upon to intervene
- the aspect of justice which can be seen in that all the evil characters are dead at the end and that Albany and Edgar survive and can rule the country
- the tragic aspect of suffering seen by those who are punished excessively or simply abused – Lear, Gloucester, Kent, the Fool, Cordelia, Edgar
- 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 judicial context seen in the various trials that occur in the play
- the context of power as seen in the behaviours of those who have power and how they mete out justice at different points of the play
- the social context of government
- the religious context and the focus on the gods or God who, as agents of justice, sit above
- the moral context of goodness and evil
- 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 justice occurs in the play, the various trials, the speeches about justice and the final assessment by the audience at the end of the play
- the settings where the trials/ speeches on justice/ acts of wrong doing/ acts of retribution take place
- the dramatic actions involving judgements that are made - Gloucester's blinding, Lear's being cast out onto the heath, Cordelia's being carried onstage dead after her hanging, Edgar's killing of Edmund; the visual impact of the various trials/ mock trials/ parodies of justice

- the language and imagery used relating to justice or the imploring of the gods to intervene
- the pithy pronouncements on justice, e.g. ‘All friends shall taste the wages of their virtues and all foes the cup of their deserving’, ‘If that the heavens do not their visible spirits/ Send quickly down to tame these vile offences, it will come...’, ‘This shows you are above,/ You justicers, that these our nether crimes/ So speedily can venge’ – that may carry weight or be empty
- 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**

‘Cordelia is an innocent victim who is saintly, yet at the same time tender and human.’

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, 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 other parts of the play it is also legitimate to make more general reference.

Please refer to pages 4 – 7.

**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:

- Cordelia as a tragic innocent, one who does nothing wrong and yet one who incurs terrible wrath from her father when he banishes her
- Cordelia as a victim of Edmund’s thirst for power, his deciding that Cordelia should be hanged and that there should be no mercy
- Cordelia as an innocent truth teller, for whom to tell less than the truth, is not to tell the truth at all, who is punished for her honesty and mocked by her sisters
- Cordelia as an innocent in two love tests: Lear’s demand that she says publicly how much she loves him and then his humiliation of her when he sets up a second love test for Burgundy and France to compete for her as a wife
- her being a victim even when Lear loves her most – his expectation that she will look after him when he abdicates and then later his belief that when they are in prison, he will have her to himself and that her young life will be congealed in his old one and that she will not have a separate identity
- her being a male fantasy figure – her kindness, soft voice, capacity for forgiveness
- her hanging (strangulation of her voice and identity), a victim of Edmund’s heartlessness and ambition
- her Christ-like function – she wars on England not for personal ambition but ‘love, dear love, and [her] ag’d father’s right’ and, echoing St Luke, she goes about her father’s ‘business’
- Cordelia as sacrifice, the evil world’s requirement of an innocent victim
- Cordelia as saint to whom Lear asks forgiveness, the end result of his pilgrimage from sinner to penitent
- Cordelia as symbol of redemption ‘Restoration, hang/ Thy medicine on my lips, and let this kiss/ Repair those violent harms that my two sisters/ Have in thy reverence made’

- her representing mercy, honesty, charity and forgiveness
- her warmth when she praises Kent for his support of her father ‘O though good Kent! How shall I live and work/ To match thy goodness’
- her warmth and tenderness to her father in the reconciliation scene, her kissing him, shedding tears on him, speaking to him softly, asking for his blessing
- her attempts to comfort her father when they are taken to prison
- Cordelia’s link to the Fool, their never appearing on stage together and yet their obvious bond and connection as truth tellers who love Lear – the opportunity for their being played by the same actor
- etc.

Some students might consider:

- her stubbornness in being unyielding, cold and formal during the love test
- her irritating self-righteousness
- her pride, resentment and inability to see the anxious feeling of her short tempered old father
- her refusal to give her father what he wants knowing that he will be left in the evil clutches of her sisters
- her smug comments to the sisters after the banishment which exacerbate their mistreatment of him
- her final words in the play: ‘Shall we not see these daughters and these sisters’ which show nothing of forgiveness
- etc.

Some might argue that her refusal to please him more at the start and her uncompromising way of doing it is understandable given her youth and given Lear’s wish to have all her love for himself.

#### **AO4 Explore connections across literary texts**

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

- the tragic aspect of victimisation as seen in the treatment Cordelia suffers at the hands of Lear, Burgundy and later Edmund
- the aspect of learning seen in the mature way Cordelia treats Lear when she is reunited with him, when she refuses to say there is a cause for her to feel grieved
- the aspect of salvation which is shown in the religious symbolism attached to Cordelia, the allusions to Christ, Lear carrying her dead body like an inverted pieta
- the aspect of hope which is offered by references to her throughout the play and in the hope of a resurrection at the end
- 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 religious context where Cordelia’s characterisation resonates with biblical associations
- the moral context as Cordelia stands for honesty and truthfulness
- familial contexts where Cordelia is seen as the loyal daughter who truly loves her father in contrast to her scheming sisters
- the gender context where Cordelia is judged harshly as an unfeeling woman and then revered as showing the ideal tenderness of a woman, her being offered as a prize to the two competing suitors
- 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 Cordelia appears in the play, how she is central in the first scene and a catalyst to the action and then how her reappearance reflects Lear's change of mood and his moral and personal growth
- Shakespeare's only giving her 100 lines in the play, her being absent for Acts 2 and 3 and yet her influence which extends beyond her appearances
- the different settings chosen by Shakespeare when Cordelia is present, her appearance in Lear's court at the start, her eviction from it, her return to England where Lear is rescued by her troops on the battlefield and her being taken to prison, the final appearance of her dead body
- the dramatic actions involving Cordelia, the effect on Lear of her reply of 'Nothing' in the love test, her waking Lear from his great affliction accompanied by music, Lear's carrying in her dead body and her body being central to his final words
- Cordelia's use of asides to inform the audience of her struggle during the love test
- the contrast of Cordelia's appearance, demeanour and language with that of her sisters
- the bitter, rather harsh language she uses to her sisters at the beginning ('I know you who you are') and end of the play ('Shall we not see these daughters and these sisters?')
- her use of unadorned language in Act 1, her emotive language in Acts 4 and 5
- 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

‘At the end of tragic texts positives always emerge.’

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, 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 – 7.

#### **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:

- Biff’s realisation and acknowledgment that his life needs to change, the hope that he will avoid his father’s mistakes, his realisation that he loves his father in spite of Willy’s weaknesses, the sense that Linda’s life in the future might be less onerous which gives the audience some comfort after the sadness of Willy’s agonising final day and his suicide
- Bolingbroke’s potential to be a better king than Richard, one who will offer a safer pair of hands for the country, Richard’s learning from his mistakes before his death and his dying with dignity and respect suggesting that human beings have the capacity to change
- Porphyro and Madeline’s escape from the castle; the knight’s no longer being enchanted by la belle dame; Lycius’ being free from the spell of the snake with human friends to support him; the punishment of the brothers in *Isabella* who guiltily leave Florence, ‘with blood upon their heads’, never to return
- the final appeal in *Tithonus* that suggests that the gods might listen to his request (as they do in the legend on which this poem is built), the sense that mortals should take comfort from the happiness of having the power to die, the fact that in spite of suffering, the daylight – and Eos will forever return on her silver wheels; in *Jessie Cameron* the possible glimpse of watchers out at sea of a pale gleam here or there, suggesting some sort of closure for Jessie; the scientific use that is being made of Miss Gee’s corpse by the Oxford Groupers who carefully dissect her knee; the Nurse in *Death in Leamington* and the workers in ‘*Out, out –*’ who suggests that life goes on
- Tess’ contentment at the end of the novel where she experiences fulfilment, her acceptance of death because she knows that Angel loves her, the hope for the future in the uniting of Angel and Liza-Lu
- Nick’s turning away from the East and its corruption, his becoming a writer, the focus on the promise of the island that ‘flowered once for Dutch sailors’ eyes’ and which it is suggested still offers promise
- etc.

Some students might consider:

- the heavy mood and sadness at the end of *Death of a Salesman*, the sense that Happy has learned nothing and will continue to make the same mistakes as Willy, the absence of people at Willy's funeral, Linda's sobbing and the irony of her saying that all the bills have now been paid making them 'free and clear'
- Bolingbroke as a usurper and the threat of civil war that audiences know will come, Bolingbroke's guilt and the reference to Cain when he learns of Richard's death, the loss of Richard as a king, one who has grown in stature and who has developed true nobility and grace before his end
- the entrapment of the knight in perpetual misery in *La Belle Dame Sans Merci*; the ominous sense of Porphyro and Madeline's fleeing 'into the storm', the deaths of the Beadsman and Angela; Isabella's pining and dying 'forlorn' 'imploring for her Basil to the last', the echoing song that is sung throughout the country: 'O cruelty,/ To steal my Basil-pot away from me'; the sense of loss and emptiness at the end of *Lamia* with the death of Lycius and the vanishing of Lamia
- the sense of loss at the end of *Jessie Cameron*, the eerie quality of the ending where there is only rumour about Jessie's death; sadness for Tithonus who is perpetually stuck in a life where he forever ages while watching his lover perpetually renewing herself, knowing too that despite his prayers the gods cannot recall their gift of immortality; the sadness felt for Cuchulain who having killed his son, fights with the sea for four days and dies; the ending of *The Convergence of the Twain* at the point when 'consummation comes, and jars two hemispheres' with the reader knowing from the first stanza that The Titanic will couch at the bottom of the sea; the suddenness of the boy's death in 'Out, out –' and the easy dismissal of him from the lives of all others who turn to 'their affairs' 'since they/ Were not the one dead'; the lack of respect and appropriate acknowledgement of the passing of both women in *Miss Gee* and *Death in Leamington*
- the way that Tess' tragedy is sharpened by the distancing of the narrative perspective at the end of the novel, Hardy's focus on the black flag and the President of the Immortals who has ended his sport with Tess, how the union of Angel and Liza-Lu is far from consoling
- emptiness at the loss of the extraordinary Gatsby and the callous responses of Tom and Daisy who seemingly continue their lives having learned nothing, the last line of the novel which suggests that Americans will still chase the dream – which the novel shows to be futile
- etc.

There should be engagement with 'always'. Students might legitimately write about catharsis in their responses.

#### **AO4 Explore connections across literary texts**

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

- the tragic aspect of the endings of texts which complete the tragic pattern as seen in the deaths of Richard, Willy, Gatsby, Tess, Lamia
- the aspect of positives emerging at the end of tragedies with the upward movement of Biff's learning, Bolingbroke promising a voyage to the Holy Land to wash the guilt from his hand, Porphyro and Madeline's escape from her cruel family, life carrying on in 'Out, out –' and *Death in Leamington*, Angel's marriage to Liza-Lu and Nick's moral development and decision to leave the East
- the aspect of the emotional effect that positive outcomes have on audiences and readers and the way that spirits can be raised
- the tragic aspect of catharsis that can be felt through the purification brought about by the intense emotions of the tragic experiences that have been witnessed
- 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 social contexts which inform the deaths of the tragic heroes, Willy's working class capitalist 1940s' America, Richard's aristocratic medieval world
- the gender context that informs responses at the end of *Jessie Cameron* and *Tithonus*, *Miss Gee*, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*
- the context of power as seen in those who bring about the deaths of those who die and the powerlessness of the victims
- the context of mortality and the focus placed in tragic texts on life and death
- the context of the affections which shapes reader/ audience responses
- 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 the endings of texts and where deaths occur – if they do, how the stories build to the endings
- the different settings chosen by writers to form the backdrop of their stories' endings
- the use of dialogue, language, dramatic action, exits and entrances, soliloquies, flashbacks, requiems, speeches in the drama texts to foreground the emergence of positives
- the narrative or poetic methods in prose and poetry texts that are used in relation to the endings, the voices that are chosen to end texts, the narratorial perspective, use of language
- etc.

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

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

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

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

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



0 8

‘In tragic texts the protagonists are exceptional characters who fall from good fortune to misery.’

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, 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 – 7.

#### **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 being exceptional in terms of the depth of his feelings and ambitions, a salesman who falls from modest good fortune in terms of his optimism (told in the back story) to a state of despair in the last days of his life
- Richard as a king who initially has absolute power and vitality who then becomes unkinged and utterly despairing; a man who watches his cousin take the crown from him; a man who is ignominiously murdered in prison
- Lycius’ and Lamia’s extraordinary love and happiness; their enjoying good fortune until their wedding day when it is destroyed by Apollonius’ cold philosophy, the shattering of their dream world and their wretchedness; Isabella’s and Lorenzo’s innocent and passionate love which marks them as exceptional, the destruction of their happiness by the evil brothers’ murder of Lorenzo which results in Isabella’s endless grief; the knight in *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* who is, by dint of his title, worthy; a knight who enjoys extraordinary experiences with the faery child and then is abandoned into misery on the cold hill side; Porphyro’s courageous daring which takes him into Madeline’s family’s castle, enjoying his night of passion with Madeline, believing his fortunes can continue but who rides off with his lover into the ominous storm
- Chaucer’s heroes who stand in ‘greet prosperitee’ and fall from ‘heigh degree into miserye’, Chaucer – or the Monk’s - using Lucifer and Adam as examples, Lucifer’s being extraordinary because he was the brightest angel and Adam’s because he was made with ‘Goddes owene finger’; Tithonus’ change from being ‘none other than a God’ and ‘glorious in his beauty’, enjoying the love of Eos, being granted immortality only to see his beauty wither and his becoming trapped in immortal old age while Eos’s youth and beauty are daily renewed; Cuchulain, the exceptional warrior, slaying more armies and bringing home more gold than any other who enjoys the adulation of a beautiful woman but then unknowingly fights and kills his son and falls into despair and death; the Titanic which was built as the Pride of Life, exceptional in its opulence which is destroyed by the Iceburg and fate and now lies lifeless on the ocean floor
- Tess’ natural moral values, her exceptional capacity to love and to feel, her happiness while at the

Dairy with Angel and then her unmitigated misery after she is abandoned; Tess' D'Urberville ancestors who enjoyed the prosperity of their aristocracy but who fall from grace – How the Mighty are Fallen

- Gatsby's having the extraordinary promises of life, his being exceptional in his gorgeousness, his achieving his dream of being reconnected with Daisy, his fantastic wealth, only to be shattered by Tom's cruel malice
- Etc.

Students might legitimately interpret 'exceptional' in a variety of ways.

Some students might consider:

- Willy's not being exceptional at all (cf Miller's intentions) but an ordinary salesman who is deeply flawed, one who is deluded and never in a state of good fortune but one who at sixty becomes engulfed in despair and commits suicide
- Richard's not having exceptional qualities as a king which is why he is usurped, but who still falls from the good fortune of having power and luxury into misery
- Lamia who begins with little good fortune (since she is a snake) but who is extraordinary in her ingenuity and her beauty, who then rises to good fortune in the love she shares with Lycius, but who falls into misery as Apollonius exposes her deception; Porphyro and Madeline, who do not fall into misery but escape her father's control and ride off into the future; Lorenzo who is not exceptional – and who is not characterised as such - but just a lowly servant which is the reason for the brothers' murder of him; the knight who is hardly exceptional in the poem's narrative since he starts and ends as one 'haggard and woe-begone' with anguished brow and fading cheeks
- Miss Gee's not being exceptional in any way, her not having any good fortune and yet her falling into the misery of cancer; Milton's Satan's having fallen from grace in the story that precedes the extract, changing from celestial light to 'this mournful gloom' but Satan's not being miserable but defiant and exceptional in his pride and energy; Jessie Cameron's being extraordinary in her courage but not being in a state of good fortune since she is always shown battling – either with her would-be lover or the night and sea; the boy in 'Out, out –' and his being an ordinary unnamed child who is used for industrial labour and who never has any good fortune (not even his supper) but whose misery intensifies when he loses his hand and then his life; the woman in *Death in Leamington* whose life, good fortune and misery are not detailed but can only be guessed
- Tess' as a working class girl not having good fortune and whose potential for happiness is damaged from the start, whose misery intensifies, although she is not miserable at her death but at peace
- Gatsby's ordinariness (if not looked at through Nick's biased eyes), his limitations given his working class origins which forever prevent his being considered exceptional, his never really having prosperity since he is always reaching for the green light which eludes him
- etc

#### **AO4 Explore connections across literary texts**

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

- the aspect of tragic protagonists as seen in Willy, Richard, Tess, Gatsby, Jessie Cameron, Satan, Miss Gee, Lycius, Porphyro
- the aspect of tragic protagonists having exceptional qualities or lives as seen in Richard as king, Gatsby's extraordinary wealth and gorgeousness, Tithonus' gloriousness, Lucifer's being the brightest angel, Tess' exceptional beauty and integrity
- the aspect of good fortune and prosperity as seen in the status of Richard, Isabella, Adam, the D'Urberville knights – of which Tess is a descendant, Gatsby's wealth
- the aspect of tragic misery as seen in Willy's depression, Richard's despair, Lycius' being empty of delight, Tithonus morbid philosophising and misery, Tess' terrible emptiness and suffering when

she realises Alec has lied to her about Angel, Gatsby's understanding what a grotesque thing a rose is

- 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 power as seen in the shifts from power to powerlessness by Richard, Gatsby, Cuchulain, Lamia
- the social context that shapes and intensifies the protagonists' misery, as seen in Tess' isolation after conceiving and giving birth to her child out of wedlock, Gatsby's not being of old money, Lorenzo's lowly origin which outrages Isabella's brothers
- the gender context as seen when Tess suffers more misery than any of the male characters,
- the context of the affections in which writers focus on the misery of the protagonists, as seen in Willy's musings and hallucinations, in Richard's soliloquies, in Gatsby's outpourings of sadness, of Tithonus' despairing dramatic monologue
- 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 the protagonists' fall from good fortune to misery and when the writers inform readers of the fall
- the different settings chosen by authors which are a backdrop to the prosperous or miserable experiences of the protagonists
- the use of dialogue, language, dramatic action, exits and entrances, soliloquies, flashbacks in the drama texts to foreground the exceptional qualities of the protagonists and their fall from good fortune to misery
- the narrative or poetic methods in prose and poetry, the use of narrative perspective, other voices, structure, language and imagery in relation to the exceptional qualities of the protagonists and their fall from good fortune to misery
- 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
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