

AS
ENGLISH LITERATURE B
7716/1A

Paper 1A Literary genres: Drama: Aspects of tragedy

Mark scheme

June 2023

Version: 1.0 Final



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

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of students' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

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Level of response marking instructions

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

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

Step 1 Determine a level

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

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

Step 2 Determine a mark

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

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

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

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

Information for Examiners marking Aspects of tragedy: closed book

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

The significance of closed book

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

There are specific issues for AO2 – how meanings are shaped in texts. Students will not have 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 8) 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 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 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:

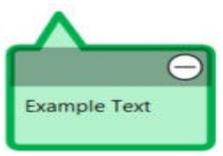
- has the student engaged in a relevant debate or constructed a relevant argument?
- has the student referred to different parts of the text to support their views?
- has the student referred to the author's dramatic method?
- the student's AO1 competence.

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. Use the Model Marked Script for guidance.

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

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

17. 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

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>	

0 1

Othello – William Shakespeare

Explore the significance of 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 Iago's villainy
- Othello's response to Iago's manipulation
- 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, but as 'significance' relates to contextual, structural, linguistic and interpretative issues some strands listed could easily 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.

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

Please refer to pages 4–8.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

With respect to 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 Iago's continuing escalation of the duping of Othello, having already planted seeds of doubt in Othello's mind about Desdemona's fidelity and Cassio's propriety in wooing her on Othello's behalf; the extract begins with Othello seeming persuaded by Desdemona's honesty and moves to his reliance on Iago at the end and his soliloquy that shows growing rejection of Desdemona and regret about marrying her; the first of Othello's three soliloquies revealing his turbulent state of mind, his tragic isolation and how ensnared he has become in Iago's plan
- the contextualisation of the extract: before the extract, Desdemona's exchange with Cassio and then Othello to try and get Cassio re-instated and the beginning of Iago's manipulations about Cassio's role in Othello and Desdemona's courtship; the extract precedes Desdemona's dropping of the handkerchief and Othello's intention in the final moments of the scene to kill Desdemona
- the seeming honesty of Iago and the way he ingratiates himself with Othello
- Iago's lying about being Cassio's friend
- his wickedness in wrecking a loving marriage by turning Othello towards hate for Desdemona
- his false politeness and his ostensibly deferring to Desdemona's superiority
- Iago's manipulating Othello's trust and prompting Othello to respond with doubt: 'I see y'are moved'
- Iago's opportunism in manipulating Othello for his own advancement
- Iago's careful scheming as he manipulates Othello by suggesting and implying wrongdoings rather than overtly stating them

- Iago's role-playing of the obedient servant with his false exits, returning to manipulate Othello further
- the lengthy speeches from Iago to highlight his supposed concerns about Desdemona and Cassio
- Iago's lines dominating the extract and the brevity of Othello's lines suggesting his reliance on Iago
- Iago's cultivating Othello's paranoia in having Desdemona watched to test her
- Othello's appearing to be isolated and ensnared by Iago
- Othello's initial resistance and disbelief that Desdemona could be unfaithful
- Othello's tragic confusion and disorientation caused by thinking that Desdemona might be unfaithful
- the growth of Othello's blind trust in Iago
- Othello's belief in Iago's good intentions
- Othello's self-deprecation and perception of himself as a victim and open assessment of his vulnerabilities
- Othello's turning love into hate
- the emotional intensity of Othello's reaction to Desdemona's unfaithfulness in the soliloquy
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

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

- the aspect of villainy as shown in Iago's speeches and strategy
- the aspect of tragic suffering shown in Othello's increasing doubt about Desdemona
- the aspect of a noble protagonist experiencing a tragic fall
- the aspect of victims as shown through Othello in the extract and Desdemona and Cassio elsewhere in the play
- etc.

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

With respect to significance of contexts in relation to the task focus might be on:

- the psychological context of suffering as seen in Othello's shifting mindset between loving and doubting Desdemona
- the moral context of Iago's villainy
- the context of the affections as the audience witness Othello's love for Desdemona turn to murderous hatred
- the gender context of how women were treated, as seen in Desdemona's being valued in terms of marriage and desirability
- 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 structural aspect of the extract following on from the earlier part of Iago's conversation with Othello to suggest Desdemona's infidelity; this extract is taken from the crucial turning point in Othello's thinking about Desdemona; the escalating tension as Iago evades the topic and leaves it to Othello's imagination; the culmination of Iago's manipulations in Othello's soliloquy
- the use of Iago's lengthy speeches to dominate the exchange and shift the tragic focus to Othello's misguided doubts about Desdemona; the imbalance between Iago's lengthy, more complex speeches to sustain his manipulation and Othello's shorter, uncertain, emotionally raw utterances

- the setting of Othello's private chamber; the wider setting of Cyprus
- the use of the soliloquy to present the psychological turmoil of Othello to the audience
- the use of irony in Iago's apparent honesty and Desdemona's actual honesty
- the use of shared lines in presenting the close and manipulative relationship between Iago and Othello, eg 'And happily repent/Farewell, farewell'
- the stage business of Iago's 'going' and 'returning'
- the use of formal, elevated diction
- the use of imagery associated with corruption ('rank' and 'foul') or vision and sight, and language associated with respect and deference
- 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:

- 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
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King Lear – William Shakespeare

Explore the significance of 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
- 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, but as ‘significance’ relates to contextual, structural, linguistic and interpretative issues some strands listed could easily 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.

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

Please refer to pages 4–8.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

With respect to 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: the re-appearance of Lear after the storm scenes as a rambling and confused old man and Gloucester’s recognition of him by voice alone; the sight of Gloucester initiates Lear’s reflection about his daughters’ cruel treatment of him, as Lear seems to mistake Gloucester for Gonerill; the focus on adultery and misogyny from Lear as he rants about adultery; Gloucester as a polite and deferential listener who recognises Lear’s madness
- the contextualisation of the extract: prior to the extract, Gloucester’s suicide attempt and Lear entering with his crown of flowers; after the extract, Gloucester wants to kiss Lear’s hand and Lear asks Gloucester to read a challenge which, being now blind, he cannot do; Lear speaks of justice and the scene closes with the entrance of Cordelia’s soldiers to take Lear back with them and his running off
- the presentation of Lear as rambling and fixated on the past cruelty of his daughters
- Lear’s first speech in the extract as a summing up of his experience
- Lear’s speeches as revealing his frailty and his growing insight about his mortality
- the presentation of Lear as volatile and restless
- Lear’s still seeming mad, or frail, or vulnerable
- that Lear shows insight and reason in madness
- Lear’s appearing to be regal despite all this and ‘every inch a king’, understanding the irony of his situation
- the presentation of Lear as a tragic victim

- the presentation of Lear as believing himself to be regal in the way he passes judgement on Gloucester's adultery
- the ironic use of the crown of flowers which Lear wears and contrasts with his crown worn earlier in the play
- the presentation of Lear as a hateful misogynist who is cruel to his daughters
- the presentation of Lear as a parody of what a monarch should be, stripped of his clothes of state 'dressed fantastically with flowers'
- the pitiable state of Gloucester without his eyes
- Gloucester's humbleness in falling to his knees and attempting to kiss Lear's hand
- Gloucester as a model of loyalty to Lear, and showing sympathy to him despite his own suffering
- the role of Gloucester as a sympathetic audience for Lear and one who listens with insight to Lear's judgment on his adultery
- the presence of Edgar on stage as a silent onlooker
- the use of costume to present Lear as mad and Gloucester as blinded
- the poignant and pitiable reunion of the two men that highlights the play's focus on blindness and insight
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

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

- the aspect of the tragic fall seen in Lear's demeanour on stage
- the aspect of tragic suffering seen in Lear and Gloucester
- the aspect of excessive punishment seen in Lear's madness and Gloucester's blindness
- 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 in relation to the task focus might be on:

- the psychological context of madness and identity in crisis as seen in Lear's self-identification of himself as 'every inch a king'
- the moral context of Lear's rage at his daughters' treatment of him
- the gender context of Lear's misogyny in the extract and elsewhere in the play
- 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 structural aspect of the extract reintroducing Lear for the first time since the storm, and following Cordelia's description of him in 4.4; this extract occurs at a moment in the play when storylines of Lear and Gloucester interlink; the switching between verse and prose in Lear's speeches to present his madness and emotional turmoil and moments of perception or focus
- the characterisation of Lear as he moves between madness and lucidity
- the setting of 'the country near Dover'
- the use of costume and stage business, eg Lear's crown of flowers, Gloucester's kneeling before the king
- the use of exclamations, questions, contractions
- the use of animal imagery, hellish imagery, the imagery of corruption or disease, sensory imagery about speech and hearing

- 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:

- 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

Richard II – William Shakespeare

Explore the view that ‘at the end of the play, no positives emerge’.

Remember to include in your answer relevant comments 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 strands listed could easily 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 must necessarily be connected to that genre through the task.

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

Please refer to pages 4–8.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

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

Some students might consider:

- that the terrible moral transgression of the murder of a divinely-appointed king is negative rather than positive
- that Richard’s murder destabilises the nation and ultimately results in a destructive civil war so is negative rather than positive
- the dire and corrupt state of England at the end of the play as being bleakly negative rather than positive
- the horrible, gruesome and undignified nature of Richard’s death as eroding his magnitude and so being a negative rather than a positive
- the assassination of Richard as miserably unseemly and debased rather than positive
- the waste of Richard’s death as being bleak and negative rather than positive
- the guilt of King Henry and his uncomfortable involvement in the assassination as a negative indictment on his suitability to be king
- the focus on executions in the final scene as connecting to the murder of Woodstock which overshadows the start of the play, creating a negative stasis at the heart of power
- Henry’s handling of Exton and the presence of Richard’s body as being shameful and incriminating rather than positive
- the harsh way Henry deals with the loyalist plotters as being merciless rather than positive
- the disorderly argument in Henry’s first court in Westminster as being too chaotic to be positive, presenting Henry as a weak and uncharismatic king
- the division and suffering in the House of York as being embittered and isolating rather than positive
- the uncertainty about whether the rebels have been ‘ta’en or slain’ at the start of the final scene is uncertain rather than positive
- etc.

Some students might consider:

- the positive aspect of King Henry having rid England of a rotten and shameful ruler in Richard
- the presentation of Henry as a ruler who will unite and heal the nation after Richard's inefficacy, and it being a positive which emerges
- the stability implied for England by Henry's reign with its established line of succession as a positive
- the public and aristocratic support that Henry enjoys as a positive, which emerges in the belief that he will be a more effective leader
- the elevation of Richard to heroic and noble through his death scene as a positive which emerges
- Richard's understanding of his own human frailty as an emerging positive, as seen in his connection with the groom in Act 5
- the humility and mercifulness of Henry to Aumerle after York's intercession as being positive
- the determination and persistence the Duchess of York shows in pleading for her son's life as positive
- the light-hearted, farcical scene of the Yorks arriving to see Henry as positive in its comic absurdity
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

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

- the aspect of positives emerging from a tragic situation, as shown in the decisive handling of the rebellion
- the aspect of tragic endings where the main plot is resolved, as seen in Richard's fall and death, and new beginnings being pointed up
- the aspect of learning and moral growth in the characters at the end, as shown in Richard's soliloquy and Henry's need to atone for Richard's death
- 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 focus might be on:

- the political context of how monarchs use their power – mercifully, cruelly or expediently – as seen in Henry's treatment of the rebels and Aumerle
- the moral context of political executions and whether anything positive can arise from them
- the literary context of *de casibus* tragedy in which life events are held up to moral scrutiny to provide warnings about bad leadership or examples of good leadership
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

With respect to analysis of dramatic method in relation to the task focus might be on:

- the climactic moment of Richard's death scene and the alternating of scenes in Act 5 between Richard's story and Bolingbroke's as King Henry; the accelerating pace of the unfolding action and the building of suspense about Richard's inevitable death; the resolution of earlier plot-lines, such as Aumerle's involvement in the conspiracy, or the proleptic hints about Henry's reign
- the use of settings in relation to emerging positives, eg King Henry's court, or Pomfret Castle

- the speeches of Richard and Bolingbroke in relation to emerging positives, eg the self-awareness of Richard in his only soliloquy at 5.5, or Henry's speech about the crushing of the rebellion at the end of 5.5 or his brief, repetitive lines in 5.3 urging the Duchess of York to 'stand up'
- the use of other voices and dialogue to present emerging positives, such as the Duchess of York in 5.3
- the use of motifs, symbols and images, in relation to emerging positives, eg blood, or tears, or prayers and pardons
- the use of humour, farce and extended word play in relation to emerging positives, as in 5.3 with the Yorks and Aumerle in front of King Henry
- 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.

0 4

Death of a Salesman – Arthur Miller

Explore the view that ‘the female characters in the play are victims who deserve our sympathy’.

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, but as ‘significance’ relates to contextual, structural, linguistic and interpretative issues some strands listed could easily address more than one AO.

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

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

Please refer to pages 4–8.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

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

Some students might consider:

- how the female characters are deserving of sympathy for the way they are subject to the manipulations and self-interest of the male characters, eg The Woman being treated in a humiliating way when Biff turns up at the hotel, or the way the Loman brothers commodify the women they date
- how Linda is a victim of Willy’s erratic behaviour and bad temper and so deserves our sympathy
- how Linda is left a widow at the end of the play and so deserves our sympathy
- how the attitude of male characters in the play might suggest that Linda is a victim and so prompts the audience to sympathise, eg Biff exits ‘with her in his arms’ at the end of the play
- how Linda was the innocent victim in the adulterous affair that Willy had
- how Linda is a victim of economic hardship caused by Willy’s inability to do his job properly and bring in a sufficient wage
- how Linda is taken advantage of by her sons and so is a victim of their selfishness and thoughtlessness and so deserves our sympathy
- how she is a victim of the dysfunctional family dynamic and is caught between Willy and her sons and so deserves our sympathy
- how The Woman is a victim of inflexible gender stereotypes that see her as an object of desire, eg how Willy is dismissive of her when Biff knocks on the door
- etc.

Some students might consider:

- how Miller presents the female characters as aligning with supposedly conventional stereotypes of wife/mother/seductress and so making them two-dimensional and so not eliciting sympathy, eg

The Woman's name (Miss Francis) is only used once and Miss Forsythe is described as 'Girl' in the *dramatis personae*

- how Linda's behaviour is controlling of Willy and indulges his erratic behaviour and so is not deserving of our sympathy
- how Linda seems to be managing the finances and making arrangements to get things fixed or paid for and so does not seem like a victim: she is someone who manages and takes control of things
- how The Woman uses Willy for material gain, eg to get stockings, and so cannot be considered a victim
- how The Woman deliberately disregards Willy's marital status and chooses to have an affair with him so she is not a victim
- how Miss Forsythe and her friend in Frank's Chop House aren't susceptible to Happy's attempts to invite them along to dinner and so are not victims of his unsubtle overtures
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

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

- the aspect of tragic victims
- the aspect of sympathy for those who experience suffering, as seen in Linda enduring Willy's behaviour
- the aspect of domestic tragedy in which family dynamics can lead to or be the cause of tragic outcomes
- 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 focus might be on:

- the gender context in constructing victims along perceived social roles, eg wife/mother/lover
- the moral context of how people treat each other and whether they show respect, indifference or cruelty
- the psychological context of a victim mentality
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

With respect to analysis of dramatic methods in relation to the task focus might be on:

- the structure of the play and where the focus on the female characters is placed: Linda's support for Willy at the start moving to her sorrow and 'release' at the end of the play; the ambiguous status of The Woman as an imagined presence in the play; the time shifts between the imagined past and the present in relation to female characters; key events involving female characters, such as The Woman having to hide in the bathroom and her undignified exit from it in front of Biff; the role that female characters have in plot development in relation to victims, eg Linda's revelation about Willy's suicide attempt; the embedded presentation of The Woman in Willy's remembered past
- the use of imagined and actual settings, such as the graveside, the restaurant, the hotel room, the Loman's family home
- the use of naturalistic stage directions, music, props in relation to female characters, eg The Woman's stockings, Linda's flowers, the flute music and the 'darkening stage' in the Requiem

- the use of voices and dialogue in relation to female characters, eg Linda's speech at the end of the play, or The Woman's in her angry exchange with Willy
- the use of motifs, symbols and images in relation to female characters, eg the repetition of 'free' at the end, or stockings for The Woman
- 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.

0 5

A Streetcar Named Desire – Tennessee Williams

Explore the view that ‘there is no greatness in the play – only ordinary people leading ordinary lives’.

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, but as ‘significance’ relates to contextual, structural, linguistic and interpretative issues some strands listed could easily address more than one AO.

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

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

Please refer to pages 4–8.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

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

Some students might consider:

- that ordinary people and ordinary lives contain tragic events and deserve to be represented
- the play’s focus on domestic tragedy which deals with family crises as tragedies, as with Blanche and Stella having to deal with the loss of Belle Reve following the death of elderly relatives
- Blanche is not great, rather she is an ordinary drunkard whose life has pitifully spiralled out of her control
- Blanche is not great, rather she is ordinary as she loses her job and falls on hard times
- Blanche is not great in her fall, rather she is ordinary for losing her inheritance
- Blanche is not great, rather she is ordinary for her unhappy marital experiences
- Mitch is an ordinary, uninspiring man who still lives with his mother and has unrealistic expectations of Blanche
- Stanley has no greatness in his villainy, rather he is a mean bully who commits violent abuse
- etc.

Some students might consider:

- the greatness of Blanche’s hopes for her future and her belief in something better
- the greatness of the glorious past of Belle Reve
- the greatness of Blanche’s suffering – she is made poor, essentially homeless and is then violently attacked
- the greatness of her personal dignity as she leaves the Kowalskis’ flat
- the greatness of Blanche’s ability to endure unbearable suffering
- the greatness of Stanley and Stella’s love
- the greatness of Stanley’s villainy in his cruelty to Blanche

- the greatness of life in New Orleans with its vibrancy and excitement, in contrast to the small-minded, deathly Laurel whence Blanche arrived
- the greatness of the New Orleans community as it is positively redefined by its immigrant population
- etc.

Some students may legitimately see Blanche as being extraordinary in the ordinary lives of others. Some students may legitimately argue that ordinary is the opposite of greatness and that ordinary people or ordinary lives have value in their own right. Some students may legitimately engage solely with debates around ‘no greatness’.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

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

- the aspect of magnitude in a tragic protagonist
- the aspect of great suffering
- the aspect of domestic tragedy having storylines taken from the everyday family life and that ordinary people or ordinary lives are suitable material for tragedy regardless of the conventions of classical tragedy
- 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 focus might be on:

- the social context of emulating or aspiring to greater things than ordinary life provides
- the gender context of ambitions of greatness for women and how patriarchal society limits that
- the cultural context of greatness in the American present in New Orleans and the faded greatness of the plantation past
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

With respect to analysis of dramatic method in relation to the task focus might be on:

- the structure of the play that presents ordinary events building up to an understated ending; the fragmented uneven progression of time in relation to ‘ordinary’; the use of contrasts between characters or between times and places; the use of gaps and time leaps in relation to ‘ordinary’ or ‘greatness’
- the use of settings: New Orleans; the Kowalski’s flat and within it the bathroom, the bedroom; the remembered settings of Belle Reve, the seedy Pink Flamingo Hotel, Laurel, in relation to ‘ordinary’ or ‘greatness’
- the use of characterisation and contrasts between characters in relation to ‘ordinary’ or ‘greatness’
- the use of dialogue and speeches in relation to ‘ordinary’ or ‘greatness’
- the use of entrances and exits or dramatic action in relation to ‘ordinary’ or ‘greatness’
- the use of motifs, symbols and images in relation to ‘ordinary’ or ‘greatness’, eg Blanche’s focus on Shep Huntleigh in the final stages of the play
- 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.