

A-level
ENGLISH LITERATURE B
7717/1B

Paper 1B Literary genres: Aspects of comedy

Mark scheme

June 2022

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 comedy: closed book

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

The significance of closed book

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

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

Arriving at Marks

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

Using the Mark Bands

8. When placing answers in mark bands, examiners need to look closely at the descriptors and the detailed generic mark bands on page 9. The key words for the bands are important and are printed below.

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

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

Advice about marking each section

Section A

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

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

Section B

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

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

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

Section C

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

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

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

Annotation











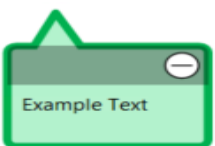




















15. Examiners should remember that annotation is directed solely to senior examiners.

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

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

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

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

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

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

The assessment objectives and their significance

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

Reminder: The AOs are as follows:

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts.

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

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

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

Mark	AO	Typical features	How to arrive at mark
Band 5 Perceptive/Assured 21–25 marks <p>‘Perception’ is demonstrated when students are showing the depth of their understanding and responding sensitively to the texts and task.</p> <p>‘Assuredness’ is shown when students write with confidence and conviction.</p>	AO5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> perceptive and confident engagement with the debate set up in the task 	<p>This band is characterised by perceptive and assured work which shows confidence, sharpness of mind and sophistication in relation to the task.</p> <p>At the top of the band students are consistently assured and will demonstrate sensitivity and perception across all five assessment objectives in the course of their response.</p> <p>At the bottom of the band there will be coherence and accuracy with some perception but with less consistency and evenness.</p>
	AO4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> perceptive exploration of connections across literary texts arising out of generic study 	
	AO3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> perceptive understanding of the significance of relevant contexts in relation to the task assuredness in the connection between those contexts and the genre studied 	
	AO2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> perceptive understanding of authorial methods in relation to the task assured engagement with how meanings are shaped by the methods used 	
	AO1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> perceptive, assured and sophisticated argument in relation to the task assured use of literary critical concepts and terminology; mature and impressive expression 	

<p>Band 4 Coherent/Thorough 16–20 marks</p> <p>‘Coherence’ is shown when students are logical and consistent in their arguments in relation to the task.</p> <p>They hold their ideas together in an intelligible way.</p> <p>‘Thoroughness’ is shown when students write carefully, precisely and accurately.</p>	AO5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> thorough engagement with the debate set up in the task 	<p>This band is characterised by coherent and thorough work where ideas are linked together in a focused and purposeful way in relation to the task.</p> <p>At the top of the band students will demonstrate a fully coherent and thorough argument across all five assessment objectives in the course of their response.</p> <p>At the bottom of the band ideas will be discussed in a shaped, relevant and purposeful way with a clear sense of direction, with one or two lapses in coherence and accuracy.</p>
	AO4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> logical and consistent exploration of connections across literary texts arising out of generic study 	
	AO3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> thorough understanding of the significance of relevant contexts in relation to the task coherence in the connection between those contexts and the genre studied 	
	AO2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> thorough understanding of authorial methods in relation to the task thorough engagement with how meanings are shaped by the methods used 	
	AO1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> logical, thorough and coherent argument in relation to the task where ideas are debated in depth appropriate use of literary critical concepts and terminology; precise and accurate expression 	

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

<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 *The Taming of the Shrew* – William Shakespeare

Read the extract below and then answer the question.

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

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

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

Please refer to pages 4–8.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

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

Some possible ideas:

- the comedic trajectory in the extract: Tranio's suggestion of the disguise strategy, discussion of how it can be achieved, Lucentio's suggestion of double disguise, the exchange of garments, Tranio's servitude and the expression of devotion between master and servant, the entry of Biondello and his questioning of the disguises, Lucentio's explanation and Tranio's advice to Biondello, Lucentio's cryptic remark to Tranio urging him to be one of the wooers, the closing exchange between Sly, the Lord and Page
- contextualisation: prior to the extract, the trick upon Sly has been initiated with Bartholomew disguised as Sly's lady, the players have arrived and the play commenced, Lucentio and Tranio's roles are established, the reason for Lucentio's arrival in Padua given, the entrance of Bianca provokes Lucentio's interest in her, Baptista pledges to arrange schoolmasters, Lucentio is entranced by Bianca, the problem of Katherina's marriage initiated
- the disguise plot initiated here, its role in Lucentio's subsequent securing of Bianca, the comic confusion and amusement it leads to, the later unravelling of disguise
- the relationship between Lucentio and Tranio, the trust between master and servant, the willing servitude of Tranio, the love and companionship of the two characters, the comedic reversal of disguised master and servant
- the resourcefulness of Tranio and Lucentio in devising their strategy, the comedic pattern of characters using their quick-wittedness to overcome problems, the positive attitude towards problem-solving found in comedic texts, the comedic spectacle of changing garments

- desire as a motivating factor in Lucentio's actions, Lucentio as a version of the romantic lover energised by sight of a potential lover, the satirisation of Lucentio's qualities as a Petrarchan lover, his supposed murderous qualities which may be played for laughs
- the comic energy of Biondello, his confusion, the suggestion of his comic dimness and the potential for him to accidentally expose the disguise strategy
- the irony of the duped, dozing Sly watching a scene of disguise and planned deception while being accompanied the disguised Lord and Page, Sly's comic drunkenness
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

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

- the comedic aspect of disguise as seen in the plot initiated here and the trick being played on Sly
- the comedic aspect of resourcefulness as seen in the manner in which Tranio and Lucentio devise their strategy
- the comedic aspect of reversal as seen in the exchange of Lucentio and Tranio's status via their disguises
- the comedic aspect of irony as seen in the structural link between the duped Sly and the scene he watches
- etc.

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

With respect to significance of contexts students might focus on:

- the context of power as seen in the various statuses of the characters, eg the sharing/reversal of power between Tranio and Lucentio, the lesser status of Biondello
- the context of gender as seen in the satirisation of male attributes, eg Sly's supposed position of power over his lady, the blend of Lucentio's lovestruck qualities alongside his supposed violent history
- the literary context as seen in the playful metatextual aspect of Sly watching a play within a play
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

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

- the extract's place towards the start of the play which is the initiation of the main disguise plot, its place following Lucentio's sighting of Bianca, its function in setting up later comedy based on disguise and confusion
- the dramatic nature of the scene, eg the onstage energy of Tranio and Lucentio as they devise their plot, the quickfire nature of their solution, the comic spectacle of exchanging garments, the energetic entrance of Biondello, his momentary confusion, Lucentio's invocations to Biondello, the exit of the main characters, the physical positioning of Sly and presenters, his dramatic start, his rich apparel, the spectacle of the disguised Page, his comic drunkenness
- the variety of dialogue, eg the cooperative interactions between Tranio and Lucentio, the sharing of the dialogue between these characters suggesting possibly equal status perhaps, the respectful nature of their exchanges, Lucentio's elevated speech, Biondello's energetic dialogue, the less deferential manner in which Biondello is spoken to, the ironically deferential words of the Lord and Page to Sly, Sly's comic dialogue

- the ironic structural link between Sly's situation and the scene he watches, the contrast between the more refined character of Lucentio and the boorish Sly
- the closing sequence of the extract which contrasts the energised, dominant Lucentio as he exits with the drunken, disinterested Sly
- relevant language features, eg the respectful words Tranio and Lucentio exchange, the question words of the confused Biondello, the ironically deferential words of the Lord and Page
- 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

***Twelfth Night* – William Shakespeare**

Read the extract below and then answer the question.

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

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

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

Please refer to pages 4–8.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

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

Some possible ideas:

- the comedic trajectory in the extract: the entrance of Malvolio and his account of the insistent messenger, Olivia's unwillingness to admit Viola, the conversation about Viola's manner, Olivia's change of heart, the exit of Malvolio and entrance of Maria, the veiling of Olivia, Viola's entrance and words of praise, Olivia's unwillingness to engage, Maria's attempt to show Viola out, Viola's refusal
- contextualisation: prior to the extract, Viola has donned her disguise and been charged with wooing Olivia on Orsino's behalf, Viola has developed an attraction to Orsino, Olivia has been established as a character who is in mourning and has renounced the company of men, Feste has suggested Olivia's foolishness, Sir Toby has encountered Viola at the gate, Olivia has instructed Malvolio to deny Viola entry
- the studied mourning and iciness of Olivia which contrasts comically with her subsequent skittishness, her comic rebuttal of Viola's attempts to woo, the growing interest she shows in Viola's manner
- the irony of Viola's position as a disguised wooer, the audience's superior knowledge of her true identity, the comedy arising from Malvolio's description of her boyish qualities, Viola's cryptic admission that 'I am not that I play', her ironic admission that 'what I would are...secret'
- the comedic resourcefulness of Viola, her refusal to leave and insistence on delivering her speech, the role of the lively, inventive comedic protagonist, the comically clichéd address to Olivia which precedes her more heartfelt words in the following part of this scene

- the gradual change of Olivia's attitude towards Viola – her admission of Viola, the sense that she enjoys the attention in spite of her dismissive words, the amusing nature of Olivia's supercilious having seen her previously been subject to Feste's barbed comments about her foolishness
- the significance of feelings and desires shown in the difficult position of Viola acting as suitor for the man she loves, her tragicomic divided duty, the comic manner in which Olivia shows interest in Viola's boyish attractive qualities – the suggestion that she admits Viola on account of desire which contrasts comically with her supposed mourning, the idea that human desire can provoke change
- the role of Malvolio as dim jobsworth, the comic playfulness of his misunderstanding of Olivia's questions, his comic description of Viola's qualities
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

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

- the comedic aspect of disguise as seen in Viola's entrance as Cesario, the audience's knowledge of this in contrast to that of the characters and the comedy arising from that knowledge
- the comedic aspect of love and wooing as seen in Viola's attempt to engage Olivia and her offhand comic rejection of the suit
- the comedic aspect of complicated relationships as seen in the initial meeting of Viola and Olivia and the problems that arise
- etc.

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

With respect to significance of contexts students might focus on:

- the context of power as seen in Malvolio and Maria's ineffective attempts to dismiss Viola, Viola's powerful insistence on seeing Olivia
- the social context as seen in the relative statuses of the characters, eg Olivia's power as head of an Elizabethan manor house, Malvolio's role as steward, Maria's subservience to Olivia
- the context of gender as seen in the prominent position of female characters in this scene, the complications of cross-dressing and identity which are initiated here
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

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

- the extract's position in the first act of the play where the first meeting of Olivia and Viola establishes a further comedic problem, the placement of this scene after Viola's acknowledgement of her feelings for Orsino which complicates her errand here
- the dramatic spectacle of the placing of Olivia's veil accompanied by Malvolio's exit and Maria's entrance, Viola's entrance in disguise following Malvolio's comic (to the audience) description of her, the role of Maria as mainly silent bystander during Olivia and Viola's mildly combative exchange, Viola's refusal to leave
- the dramatic irony by which Viola's identity is known by the audience but none of the other characters, the comedy which arises from this knowledge eg Malvolio's unwitting description of Viola's youth
- the use of dialogue to convey comedic character, eg Olivia's curiosity over Viola's appearance, Malvolio's matter-of-fact description of Viola, the mock-Petrarchan dialogue uttered by Viola contrasting comically with Olivia's curt replies

- relevant language features, eg the figurative descriptions of Viola's insistent behaviour, the natural imagery used to describe Viola's appearance, the romantic words and images in Viola's speech, the comically dismissive questions and imperatives of Olivia
- 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

***The Taming of the Shrew* – William Shakespeare**

‘Katherina’s transformation into an obedient wife provides an uplifting end to the comedy.’

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 *The Taming of the Shrew* through the lens of **comedy**, 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 meanings and interpretations, students may choose to look at all sides of the debate or just one. It is the quality of the student’s response that matters.

Some students might consider:

- the transformation of Katherina as the concluding act in the taming narrative, the sense that the main comedic problems of the play have been resolved, the marriage as a meeting of two strong characters who understand each other by the end create a feeling for comic uplift
- the fitting compliance of Katherina which suggests a sense of growth, her journey as a comedic heroine has been completed – she has changed for the better, her initial shrewish qualities have been overcome by the end of the play, audiences feel a sense of uplift at the completion of her comedic journey
- the uplifting sense that Katherina will fulfil her wifely duties, that the comedic ending of happy marriage will ensue, her acceptance of gender roles is an apt and pleasing ending to the game-playing and preceding battle of the sexes
- Katherina’s compliance suggests an uplifting victory for Petruchio – as the comedic protagonist, his success is expected, the audience derives pleasure from witnessing his success as tamer
- Katherina’s feigned obedience entertains the audience, her knowing role-playing as the supposedly tamed wife presents her as a clever victor at the end of the play – the audience feels uplifted by her clever strategy
- the pleasing irony that her demeanour is a comment on Sly’s boorish views – that Katherina’s obedience in the play that he witnesses is a satirical attack on some males’ perception of women
- etc.

Some students might consider:

- that Katherina's obedience is anything but uplifting given the way in which her attitude seems to reinforce narrow views of female roles and subservience in heterosexual relationships
- that her obedience is the product of cruelty and maltreatment rather than any sense of a symbiotic relationship, her transformation is painful to witness, she is crushed into compliance rather than actively accepting her role as wife, which is anything but uplifting
- the dispiriting suggestion that her actions are held up as a model for happy marriage, which involves accepting male dominance – this model of successful relationships runs counter to a modern sense of how marital relationships should operate
- the resolution to Katherina's journey as anti-comic: it shows the crushing of the comedic spirit rather than the uplifting success of a sparky, fiery heroine – her obedience is a cause for disappointment
- her transformation is a familiar pattern in comedy – the power she enjoys as a female character is temporary and is curtailed by the end, but this conventional return to the status quo brings no pleasure to the audience – it's a disappointing ending
- Katherina's knowing role-playing as the supposedly obedient wife is a possible view of the text, but the ending is disappointing as there is no sense in which Petruchio (or other characters) see this, the ending is too subtle to be uplifting
- etc.

NB students may legitimately take the transformation to be a process occurring during the play, or look specifically at the moment of transformation in the concluding phase of the play.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

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

- the comedic aspect of uplifting comedic endings as seen in the (possible) satisfaction derived from the play's conclusion
- the comedic aspect of transformation as seen in the development of Katherina's character
- the darker comedic aspect of cruelty as seen in the manner in which Katherina is broken at the end of the play and also at various key moments such as the journey and the feast
- 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 and moral context in relation to ideas about acceptable behaviours and marital obedience
- the context of power as seen in Katherina's capitulation and Petruchio's apparent victory
- the context of gender as seen in ideas about the conduct of women and their role in relation to their husband
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

With respect to dramatic method students might focus on:

- the position of Katherina's final speech as a transformative conclusion to the comedic narrative, the resolution of the play as the completion of the taming process

- the placement of events in the sequence of the narrative which show the taming process: the capitulation at the end of Act 4 on the journey, the communal moment between the three sets of partners, Katherina's compliance in the wager scene
- the dramatic spectacle of Katherina's transformation, her exhaustion and capitulation during the journey, Petruchio's instruction during the wager scene and Katherina's obedient entrance, the action of her placing her hand beneath Petruchio's foot symbolising her obedience
- dialogue between Katherina and Petruchio – the lengthy final speech revealing her obedience, Petruchio's victorious parting words and Katherina's silent assent, the exchange between Hortensio and Lucentio in the last lines suggesting their amazement
- relevant language details such as Katherina's term of address for Petruchio – 'sir' and husbands generally – 'thy lord, thy king, thy governor', her imperatives to other females regarding their conduct, the figurative references to male hardships, the negative language she uses to describe forward women
- etc.

Given that this is a **closed book** exam, comment 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 *The Taming of the Shrew* – William Shakespeare

‘Even though this is a play about courtship and marriage, romantic love is absent.’

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 *The Taming of the Shrew* through the lens of **comedy**, 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 4–8.

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 although Petruchio seeks marriage, this is not driven by romantic love – he arrives in Padua to ‘wive and thrive’ for financial reasons rather than reasons of the heart
- Petruchio’s taming of Katherina is a type of courtship but it has nothing to do with romance, his relationship and treatment of her is driven by desire to control, his intention is to acquire a wife who will bring him riches, the account of the marriage ceremony and the feast and tailor scenes are tantamount to cruelty rather than love
- Baptista’s desire for his daughters’ marriages is unconnected with love – he simply wants to arrange suitable matches, particularly to get Katherina off his hands, marriage is presented as a business deal rather than a romantic experience
- the three unions that are shown at the end of the play are deeply unromantic, they are concerned with power struggles: Bianca and the Widow’s refusal suggests their relationships are governed by shrewish one-upmanship and the main pairing’s relationship is about the crushing of Katherina’s spirit
- Gremio’s feelings of desire are satirised rather than being held up as a romantic desire, his intentions regarding Bianca are laughable and his attempts to win her hand are not romantic at all
- the view that the play uses the Sly framing narrative to satirise male attitudes towards love, the feigned romance between the disguised Page and Sly mirrors the lack of romantic love in the play
- etc.

Some students might consider:

- Katherina's feelings for Petruchio at the end of the play are heartfelt and romantic, her appreciation of her husband and desire to serve him are genuine and suggest a willingness to change for love
- Lucentio's deeply romantic view of Bianca, his immediate attraction to her, romantic desire as the driving force behind his actions, the energy Lucentio invests in trying to secure Bianca's affections indicates the strength of romantic feelings
- Lucentio as a version of the Petrarchan lover, perhaps a satirical version, but nonetheless a character for whom romance and appreciation of one's lover is central
- Hortensio's admiration of Bianca and desire to win her as romantically driven, his description of her as 'treasure' and reference to 'my love' suggests deep feelings and reverence for a potential partner
- Petruchio and Katherina's relationship as an atypical romantic relationship, a love based on a meeting of minds – a more genuine type of romance than the superficial partnership and attraction of Lucentio and Bianca
- the view that the play celebrates romance in the end, moving from the business arrangements at the start of the play to a position which suggests that romantic feelings can grow and emerge
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

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

- the comedic aspect of romantic love as a central part of many comedic stories, its absence here or possible presence in eg Katherina's final feelings, Lucentio's desires
- the comedic aspect of marriage and partnership as the conventional aim of romantic narrative
- the comedic aspect of power struggles between genders and its relationship (or otherwise) to romantic love
- 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 manner in which Baptista tries to determine his daughter's relationships and Petruchio's intention to acquire a wife for financial reasons
- the context of gender as seen in the various relationships in the play and the one-upmanship which suggests a lack of romantic feelings
- the social and moral context in relation to ideas about whether relationships are governed by romantic or financial matters
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

With respect to dramatic method students might focus on:

- the placement and sequence of events which suggest a lack/presence of romantic love, eg the early phase of the narrative involving Baptista's stipulation about his daughters' marriages and Petruchio's explicit declaration regarding his intentions, the later phase of the narrative which suggests the emergence of feelings of love
- the resolution of the play whereby the supposed romantic relationship of Lucentio and Bianca seems to be descending into a power struggle won by her, the emergence of the (possibly) romantic relationship of Petruchio and Katherina – or the deeply unromantic crushing of her

- the dramatic spectacle of Lucentio's sighting and infatuation with Bianca, the fiery on-stage antics of Petruchio and Katherina, the hilarity of Gremio's stated desires in contrast to his demeanour, the entertaining spectacle of the unromantic wager scene, the unified exit of Petruchio and Katherina which may suggest a romantic bond
- aspects of dialogue such as Lucentio and Hortensio's discussion of Bianca's attractive qualities, the combative unromantic exchanges between Petruchio and Katherina in the first four acts, the commanding words uttered by Baptista to the suitors, the unromantic, knockabout dialogue in the wager scene
- relevant language details such as Lucentio's mock-Petrarchan words about Bianca, Petruchio's disparaging comments about Katherina, the final speech of Katherina with its laudatory, romantic descriptions of men's commitments
- etc.

Given that this is a **closed book** exam, comment 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 *Twelfth Night* – William Shakespeare

‘The misbehaviour and trickery in the play are great fun for audiences.’

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 *Twelfth Night* through the lens of **comedy**, 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 4–8.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

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

Some students might consider:

- the hilarity caused by the drunken antics of Sir Toby and Sir Andrew, their rebellious comic spirit, their misbehaviour in a grieving household provokes laughter, the actions of two old knights who should know better is great fun to watch
- misbehaviour as the embodiment of *Twelfth Night*, Sir Toby and Sir Andrew’s refusal to comply to Malvolio’s orders celebrates the anarchic aspect of festive comedy, the fun the audience derives from seeing authority challenged by bad behaviour, the life-affirming qualities of rebellious behaviour
- Viola’s disguise as Cesario – a type of trickery which leads to entertaining comic confusion as seen in the humour arising from her conversations with Orsino about gender and identity
- Sir Toby’s trick played upon Viola and Sir Andrew which is great fun on account of their cowardly responses, the on-stage physical energy of their fight scene causes laughter, Sir Toby’s duping of his friend is enjoyable in a darkly comic way
- the enjoyment caused by the cleverness of Maria’s letter trick, the laughter arising from the revealing of Malvolio’s hypocrisy, the hilarious public humiliation of a killjoy, the audience’s sharing of the plotter’s enjoyment – all examples which go beyond mere titillation
- the treatment meted out to Malvolio causes laughter, his capture and incarceration is a fitting and entertaining punishment, Feste’s disguise as Sir Topas causes hilarity given Malvolio’s lack of awareness
- the hilarious fun caused when misbehaviour and trickery go wrong, eg the bloody coxcomb received by the knights, the final confrontation scene where Malvolio storms off stage and a tensely comic moment is enjoyed
- etc.

Some students might consider:

- the cruelty of the trick played on Malvolio which is not enjoyable to watch, the cringing humiliation of his yellow stockings, his belief that Olivia loves him is not fun to witness
- the sadism of the dark room scene is not funny given Malvolio's suffering – pity rather than fun is the result, his desperation and pleading goes beyond laughter
- the actions of Feste towards Malvolio are sadistic, his taunting of Malvolio when disguised as Sir Topas cause little enjoyment, the psychological torture is not light-hearted trickery
- Viola's feelings of misery when the 'wickedness' of her disguise trick becomes too much to bear and she feels trapped in her role as Cesario
- the supercilious and disrespectful attitudes of Sir Toby, his misbehaviour as the profligate actions of an over-privileged peer, his lack of respect for his niece's grief, his taunting of a steward who is doing his job show his misbehaviour to be thoughtless and nasty
- Sir Toby's mistreatment of his supposed friend, Sir Andrew, is exploitative rather than enjoyable, his encouragement of Sir Andrew's feelings towards Olivia and his underhand tricking of Andrew for beer money is not a cause for laughter
- the view that the play shows the shortcomings and cruelty of trickery – it reveals the limits of comedy and suggests that, at times, supposedly comic actions aren't fun to watch
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

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

- the comedic aspect of misbehaviour as seen in the antics of Sir Toby, the comedic spirit of rebellion and anarchy as linked to the time setting of *Twelfth Night*
- the comedic aspect of trickery as seen in the actions of the plotters
- the comedic aspect of fun (or its absence) as seen in audiences' reactions
- 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 Sir Toby's ability to act as he wishes, Malvolio's attempt to control him, the plotter's actions to bring down Malvolio
- the social context as seen in the acceptability (or otherwise) of misbehaviour in the world of the play, the public nature of Malvolio's humiliation
- the moral context in relation to the acceptability or otherwise of acts of misbehaviour and trickery
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

With respect to dramatic method students might focus on:

- the dramatic action, eg the late-night singing and carousing contrasted with Malvolio's disapproving manner, the cowardly reluctance of Sir Andrew and Viola, the reading of the letter as the plotters look on from the box tree, the public humiliation of the yellow stockings, the spectacle of the dark room scene and the role-playing of Feste

- the place and time settings in which misbehaviour and trickery occur, eg the late night revelry of Sir Toby in a house of mourning, the public nature of the trick played on Malvolio, the claustrophobic nature of the dark room
- the placement and sequencing of acts of misbehaviour and trickery, eg the late night revelry of Sir Toby which follows after the establishment of Olivia's sadness, the trick played on Malvolio which follows his curmudgeonly actions – which may (or may not) make such events enjoyable for the audience
- the dramatic irony of the audience's knowledge of the tricks being played which may be part of the enjoyment, the positioning of the audience which allows them to see the planning and effect of tricks while the victims remain unaware
- resolutions and outcomes of misbehaviour and tricks which invite the audience to determine whether they enjoy the actions, eg the final scene where Fabian attempts to excuse the letter trick, the anger of Malvolio and sympathy of Olivia, the bloody coxcombs received by the knights
- aspects of dialogue eg Sir Toby's comic disparaging interaction with Malvolio, Maria's glee at her plot, Malvolio's delight as he is taken in by the trick, the words of Feste (as Sir Topas) in interaction with Malvolio as he begs for help
- relevant language details such as the entertaining drunken doggerel of Sir Toby, the words of Malvolio as he reads and interprets the letter
- etc.

Given that this is a **closed book** exam, comment 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 *Twelfth Night* – William Shakespeare

‘Orsino is a ridiculous romantic hero who cannot be taken seriously.’

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 *Twelfth Night* through the lens of **comedy**, 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 4–8.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

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

Some students might consider:

- the opening scene in which Orsino’s lovesick manner and foppish pronouncements about love make him appear silly and egotistical – his feelings seem ridiculous
- Orsino as a satirical version of the Petrarchan lover, his overblown sentiments and laudatory view of Olivia as a goddess make him comically wrong and naïve, his on-going attempts to woo the disinterested Olivia make him appear ridiculous
- his inability to see through Viola’s disguise, his ironic references to Viola’s girlish qualities sets him up as dim and a figure of fun in the audience’s eyes rather than a serious romantic hero
- scenes where Orsino draws attention to his feelings and views about love, eg his speech to Viola concerning his own emotions, his sentimental attachment to the song of Feste, Feste’s perceptive judgment of Orsino’s capriciousness which reveal his ridiculousness
- the manner in which he struggles to handle his growing feelings for the disguised Viola, his fiery outburst in the final scene which causes mild laughter, his emotional threats to kill which seem comically ridiculous rather than heroic
- the rapidity with which he accepts Viola as a partner given that he knows little of her seems foolish, his supposed victorious outcome with Viola is due to comic luck rather than any heroic actions on his part
- etc.

Some students might consider:

- Orsino as the leading romantic figure in the play – the opening scene establishes the depth of his feelings, the yearning and heartache he suffers through unrequited love which are serious rather than comic matters

- the philosophical nature of his musings which explore matters of the heart, the use of imagery which includes romantic references to music, myth and nature which are cerebral and suggestive of his seriousness
- the views of other characters who see him as a serious romantic figure, eg Viola's attraction to him, the Captain who defines him as a noble would-be lover, Olivia's favourable assessment of his nobility
- his determination to woo Olivia, his unstinting desire as the driving aspect of his character, his attachment to music and unabashed expressions of passion and sorrow suggest a seriousness
- his attractive masculinity, eg his previous history as a victorious war hero, his active pursuit of Olivia towards the end of the play, his dramatic passionate outbursts and threats present him as a serious romantic hero
- his victory in securing Viola, the joy it brings him, the commanding energy he displays at the very end of the play, his emergence as a dominant character, the narrative privilege he enjoys as the initial and final speaker of the play suggest his role as a romantic hero who succeeds
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

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

- the comedic aspect of ridiculous behaviour as seen in the foolish conduct of Orsino
- the comedic aspect of the romantic hero as seen in the successful actions of Orsino
- the comic pattern of the protagonist exhibiting qualities which generate both ridicule and admiration as seen in the likeable if sometimes foolish behaviour of Orsino
- 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 human appetites and emotions as seen in the feelings and desires of Orsino
- the context of gender as seen in aspects of Orsino's behaviour which suggest conventional male elements of dominance and conventional female emotional elements
- the context of power in relation to Orsino's social status in the world of the play as the most powerful character
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

With respect to dramatic method students might focus on:

- the positioning of scenes involving Orsino in the sequence of the narrative, eg his melancholy speech in the first scene establishing his (possibly) ridiculous sentimentality, the subsequent comic nature of his emerging feelings for Viola which sits structurally alongside his professed feelings for Olivia opening him to accusations of foolish lovesick behaviour, the placing of his more forthright actions as the play develops, eg the final scene which suggests some heroic qualities
- the dramatic spectacle of his emotional actions, eg the ridiculously sentimental performance of his feelings in the opening scene, his pompous instructions to the musicians, his onstage frustration at his unreturned feelings and the tension of his feelings for Viola, his brandishing of a sword on the final scene

- the resolution of the play where Orsino appears more active and heroic/foolish in his harsh words towards Olivia and Viola and his threats to kill, his acquisition of Viola which suggests completion and a heroic ending
- the presence of dramatic irony which invites the reader to see the foolishness of Orsino's actions given the true identity and feelings of Viola – his actions are made to seem foolish rather than heroic
- dialogue revealing the nature of his feelings eg his interaction with Viola concerning men and women's feelings which make him appear foolish given the identity and feelings of his interlocutor, his dramatic accusations towards Viola and Olivia
- relevant language details such as the use of references to music and nature in the opening speech, his comic terms of address to Viola eg 'boy' which make him seem laughable given her identity, his ridiculous/heroic emphatic words in the final scene
- etc.

Given that this is a **closed book** exam, comment 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

‘Comedic texts are light-hearted: ultimately, they have nothing to say about serious matters.’

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 **comedy**, 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 4–8.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

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

Some students might consider:

- the nature of comedic texts which invite the reader to anticipate fun and happy endings, the expectation that any vaguely serious issues will be overcome, the threat of trouble is averted and darker topics such as death and suffering are absent or dealt with in a light way
- the neat structures of the drama texts where the minor problems of the characters are never taken too seriously by the audience, the comedic endings in which matters are cleared up happily and no lingering problems persist, the subject matter of both plays which deal with romantic matters in a way which is entertainingly superficial
- the light-hearted content of *The Importance of Being Earnest*, the trivial lifestyles of the privileged characters, the inconsequential plot with its lightweight problems, the jolly, upbeat sense that the lives and concerns of the characters are unrelated to the deeper concerns of life
- the absence of weighty matters from *She Stoops to Conquer*, its concerns with tricks, silly behaviour, disguise and tetchy relationships are light-hearted, audiences always feel that Kate will get her man, Tony will emerge unscathed, and life will progress
- the entertainingly light-hearted events of *Emma* in which the social events are pleasant, the world of the text is cocooned, merry and frivolous, the privileged protagonist is fondly mocked by the narrator and nothing serious is said about the wider nature of life
- the amusing content of *Tam o’Shanter* which presents a jocular story in which any threat is undermined by the fanciful inclusion of the supernatural, the aspect of drunkenness and the entertaining dialectal qualities, the concerns of the moaning speaker in *My Rival’s House* which the audience enjoys as light-hearted satire on the jealousies of female relationships
- the upbeat voice of Gilbert in *Small Island* which presents potentially serious matters in a light-hearted way, the balancing of comic moments with darker ideas whereby the overall effect is light, the exploration of racism and suffering is done in such a way that any serious matters are less central

- the ridiculous aspects of *The Nun's Priest's Tale* which are light-hearted, the use of animals, the absurdity of a talking cockerel, the comic chase sequence and folly of Chauntecleer and Russel, the expected escape of the protagonist in which the fox's threat is never seen as anything serious
- etc.

Some students might consider:

- the inclusion of more serious, sometimes darker topics in comedy, the inclusion of threat, unhappiness, possible death and social and political criticism present which invites the reader to see comedy as more than inconsequential, the avoidance of happy endings in some comedic texts, the weighty moral messages which emerge
- the exploration of serious matters in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, such as gender politics, the trivial easy nature of some lifestyles, the manner in which privilege protects some people from harm, mendacity, the obsession with status – all of which prevent the play as being described as light-hearted
- the less light-hearted significances arising from *She Stoops to Conquer* which concern the attitudes of Marlow towards women and status, issues of city and country, mistreatment of family members
- the weightier issues in *Emma*, such as the exploration of privilege and snobbery, the manner in which thoughtless attitudes can cause harm, the serious point that change is possible, that family is sacrosanct, the darker moments involving Mr Elton in the coach, ideas about marriage
- the political aspect of Swift's poem which makes stinging criticism of the General, Larkin's exploration of the unfairness of female representation, his inclusion of unsettling images, the serious points and feelings expressed about relationships in *My Rival's House* and *Mrs Sisyphus*, issues of power and gender in *Not My Best Side* – all of which are far from light-hearted
- the serious aspects of *Small Island*, eg racism and maltreatment of other humans, Bernard's war time experiences, Queenie's loss of baby Michael, the historical significance of the Windrush generation, the implied message of tolerance
- the serious moral message of *The Nun's Priest's Tale* about not succumbing to flattery, the exploration of pride, the inclusion of potential death makes the tale more than a simple light-hearted story
- etc.

NB 'Ultimately' might be handled in a number of ways in relation to where the student stands and assesses. Students might take it to mean from a position at the end of the text or from any number of different points within the text, or after weighing up a number of different interpretations.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

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

- the comedic aspect of light-hearted matters and events in comedy, such as the tricks played by Tony Lumpkin and the farcical events resulting from Jack's fibs
- the inclusion of more serious matters and events in comedy eg the inclusion of gender politics, death and political issues
- the comedic aspect of happy endings which avoid serious endings involving death and disappointment
- the function of comedy as a way of regulating and commenting on human conduct through eg satire, humiliation and mockery
- 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 texts students might focus on:

- the moral and social context as seen in the way in which comedy can offer comment on serious issues such as gender issues in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, attitudes towards country dwellers in *She Stoops to Conquer*, political matters in Swift's poem
- the context of power as seen in the serious and light-hearted issues arising from power struggles such as Lady Bracknell's attempts to prevent a marriage she sees as unsuitable, the comic power struggles between Chauntecleer and Pertelote, the comic/serious vying for power in *My Rival's House*, the experiences of racism as shown in *Small Island*
- the context of gender as seen in the way that male and female conduct is explored in light-hearted/serious ways, eg the issues around female agency and male power in *Not My Best Side*, the actions of Emma in relation to engineering matches and the light-hearted nature of her errors
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

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

- the positioning and subsequent development of light-hearted events in the plays, eg the comic opening of *The Importance of Being Earnest* with its light-hearted gags based on cucumber sandwiches and apparently inconsequential lifestyles, the comic trickery of Tony in *She Stoops to Conquer* with his playful jokes and cheeky, unserious actions
- the light-hearted on-stage drama of *She Stoops to Conquer*, eg the misunderstandings of Marlow and Hastings, the exasperation of Mr Hardcastle, the playful disguise of Kate and her unveiling, the comically light-hearted/serious obstacle that is Lady Bracknell, the increasingly energetic Jack in *The Importance of Being Earnest* as he rushes to the bookcase to confirm his heritage
- the resolution of the narratives where light-hearted/serious significances emerge eg the serious business of Emma's marriage which underlines the social importance of the act, the bleak ending of *Not My Best Side* which confirms the lack of power enjoyed by the female, the unhappy conclusion to *My Rival's House* which suggests that familial relationships make humans miserable, the comedic escape of Chauntecleer which generates a serious moral lesson
- various voices, eg the light-hearted, ironic voice of the Nun's Priest, the serious, angry voice of Mrs Sisyphus, the entertainingly light-hearted voice of Gilbert relating his experiences
- the use of dialogue, eg the serious exchange between Queenie, Hortense and Gilbert as baby Michael is given away, the comic interaction between Chauntecleer and Pertelote showing their on-going vying for dominance, the light-hearted, comic conversation between the fussy Mr Woodhouse and various characters
- relevant language features eg the bitter figurative language of the narrator in *My Rival's House*, the serious and offensive racial language of Bernard
- etc.

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

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

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

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

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

0 8

‘Male characters in comedic literature are nothing more than figures of fun.’

To what extent do you agree with this view in relation to some of the male characters in **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 **comedy**, 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 4–8.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

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

Some students might consider:

- the roles and attitudes of male characters in the drama texts – they are sources of humour and there for audiences to laugh at and with, their lack of seriousness about life, their foibles, silly behaviour and attributes make them figures of fun
- the view that Jack and Algernon in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, are a pair of foppish, privileged characters whose actions and manner invite the audience to laugh, the lack of growth undergone – they haven’t learnt any lessons about themselves or undergone any moral development by the end of the play and remain superficial figures of fun
- Marlow in *She Stoops to Conquer* is made to seem ridiculous, eg his hang-up about upper class women makes him appear foolish, the joke played upon him by Tony, his comic shyness, his snobby attitudes to Hardcastle’s house, his reliance upon Kate’s ingenuity to secure her hand
- Tony as an easy-going trickster whose simple-minded, unambitious manner reminds the audience of the country bumpkin figure, his on-stage manner is often played for laughs, his involvement in the mother’s ‘journey’ confirms his clown-like status
- Mr Elton is satirised as a self-interested fool whose misreading of Emma’s feelings makes him appear a laughing stock, his hurried marriage and association with Mrs Elton makes him appear foolish, Mr Woodhouse is presented as an old fool – his obsession with drafts, snow and gruel paint him as a character to be laughed at
- Tam is presented as a drunken fool who can’t see the problems he creates for himself, his stupidity at stopping by Alloway Kirk, his weakness for Nannie and his reliance upon Meg to save him suggests he is a laughing stock, the stupidity of Sisyphus who appears to enjoy his eternal torture, the boy in *Not My Best Side* whose supposed dominance is undercut by his acne and geekiness
- Gilbert’s hapless actions invite the reader to see him as a figure of fun, his initial failure to sleep with Hortense, her disparaging comments about him, the failed bee business, his lack of success

in his new homeland suggest his foolishness, Bernard is set up as a character to be mocked – his clipped, uptight voice, his cuckolding, his idiotic racism, the ignominy he suffers on the birth of the baby

- Chauntecleer's absurd knowledge of academic matters, his pride and stupidity, the placing of him in a down-at-heel setting, his entrapment by the fox suggest his foolishness
- etc.

Some students might consider:

- male characters are more than just figures of fun – many achieve their aims and are successful by the end of their comedic journey, they are often clever, powerful, dominant, romantic and much loved by their partners in the world of the text, and liked by readers too
- Jack and Algy in *The Importance of Being Earnest* win the hands of the women, they circumvent various problems which emerge, they have a quick-wittedness and privileged position which elevates them beyond mere figures of fun, Jack becomes a better person in the eyes of Lady Bracknell
- Marlow develops as a character in *She Stoops to Conquer*, has overcome his shyness with refined ladies, he marries Kate and emerges as the fine young man Sir Charles claims he is, Tony is clever in outwitting the London boys, he succeeds in avoiding marriage to Constance – all of which suggest these characters have more to them than stupidity
- males in the drama texts could also be seen in a negative light – Jack and Algy are wastrels and dislikeable figures whose privilege and irrelevance annoys the reader, their mendacity and maltreatment of their women makes them more than figures of fun, Marlow's snobbery may also be read as a negative trait which goes beyond mere foolishness
- Mr Knightley is more of a romantic hero, a steadfast, honest man who secures Emma's heart and wins the admiration of her father, Robert Martin is also admirable, the reader warms to Mr Woodhouse in spite of his fussiness, viewing him in the same way Emma does, perhaps even as a pitiable figure
- Tam fulfils the role of hero, emerging from his escapade unscathed, he lives to fight another day and his status of rough diamond is enjoyed by readers, the clever, witty narrator in *The Flea* can't be accurately described as a figure of fun – he may also be seen in a much less savoury light too, Sisyphus may equally be viewed as a tragic character, or one whose work ethic is admirable
- Gilbert's development during the novel suggests his heroism, he acquires a house and child and has won Hortense over, he appears caring, witty and able to bounce back after life's challenges, Bernard appears to want to be a more understanding person and given his experiences in India and his cuckolding, may be seen as pitiable, Arthur Bligh is a much more tragic figure
- Chauntecleer's escape from the fox suggests heroism, his quick-wittedness and acquisition of self-knowledge are the traits of a comedic hero rather than a figure of fun
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

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

- the comedic aspect of mockery and ridicule as seen in the way supposed figures of fun are viewed as seen in the foolish old man manner of Mr Woodhouse
- the comedic aspect of the successful protagonist who learns lessons or works towards their own success as seen in Gilbert's perseverance, Jack's discovery of his birth, Marlow's overcoming of his problem
- endings which usually suggest the triumph of male protagonists as seen in Tony's coming of age, Chauntecleer and Tam's escape
- 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 texts students might focus on:

- the context of gender as seen in the way that male behaviours are held up for inspection and possible ridicule, eg the mendacity of Jack, the inability of Sisyphus to change, Chauntecleer's pride
- the context of power as seen in the status of male characters, eg the positions of Mr Woodhouse and Mr Knightley as important men in the world of the text, the superiority of Marlow, the privileges enjoyed by Jack and ?
- the moral context as seen in the development (or otherwise) of male characters, eg the sense that Bernard Bligh is becoming more tolerant, the view that little is learned by Algy and Jack about their mendacious conduct, the moral lesson learned by Chauntecleer, the dreadful conduct of Swift's General
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

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

- the positioning of male characters at the start of the text, their role in relation to the various comedic problems and other characters, eg Tony as a trickster, Marlow's shyness as an obstacle to marriage, Mr Woodhouse as a fussy father
- the journey undergone in the narrative leading to resolutions where character may emerge as possessing different qualities, eg the quick-wittedness of Chauntecleer, the backstory of Bernard in India which makes him pitiable, the successful endeavours of Gilbert towards the end of the novel
- the on-stage drama of *She Stoops to Conquer*, eg Tony's playful manner at the inn, the energy of his play-acting, the superciliousness of Marlow as he arrives at Hardcastle's house, his comic lack of awareness contrasted with his host's exasperation, the foppish interior of Jack's house in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, the comic drama of the exposure of his lie about his brother
- various voices, eg the demeaning voice of the boy in *Not My Best Side*, the creepy smugness of the speaker in *The Flea*, the lively, entertaining narration of Gilbert
- the use of dialogue, eg the words exchanged between Emma and Mr Knightley which suggest his moral rightness and heroic qualities, the words of Chauntecleer as he reveals the lesson he has learned, the aggressive dialogue exchanged between Gilbert and Bernard
- relevant language features eg the joyful words of Jack as he realises his new-found status, the comic language of Lumpkin, the fussy repetitiveness of Mr Woodhouse
- etc.

Given that this is a **closed book** exam, comment 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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