

AS
ENGLISH LITERATURE B
7716/1A

Paper 1A Literary genres: Drama: Aspects of tragedy

Mark scheme

June 2024

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.

No student should be disadvantaged on the basis of their gender identity and/or how they refer to the gender identity of others in their exam responses.

A consistent use of 'they/them' as a singular and pronouns beyond 'she/her' or 'he/him' will be credited in exam responses in line with existing mark scheme criteria.

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

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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:

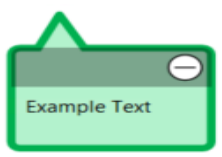
- has the student engaged in a relevant debate or constructed a relevant argument?
- has the student referred to different parts of the text to support their views?
- has the student referred to the author's dramatic method?
- the student's AO1 competence.

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	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	perceptive exploration of connections across literary texts arising out of generic study	
	AO3	- 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	- perceptive understanding of authorial methods in relation to the task - assured engagement with how meanings are shaped by the methods used	
	AO1	- 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	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	logical and consistent exploration of connections across literary texts arising out of generic study	
	AO3	- 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	- thorough understanding of authorial methods in relation to the task - thorough engagement with how meanings are shaped by the methods used	
	AO1	- 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	

Band 3 Straightforward/ Relevant 11–15 marks 'Straightforward' work is shown when students make their ideas in relation to the task clearly known. 'Relevant' work is shown when students are focused on the task and use detail in an appropriate and supportive way.	AO5	straightforward engagement with the debate set up in the task	This band is characterised by straightforward and relevant work where the student's response to the task is clear and intelligible. At the top of the band students will demonstrate consistent straightforward understanding in the course of their argument. Ideas will be developed relevantly. At the bottom of the band there will be flashes of relevant understanding with evidence of straightforward thinking.
	AO4	explores connections across literary texts arising out of generic study in a straightforward way	
	AO3	- straightforward understanding of the significance of relevant contexts in relation to the task - relevant connections between those contexts and the genre studied	
	AO2	- straightforward understanding of authorial methods in relation to the task - relevant engagement with how meanings are shaped by the methods used	
	AO1	- 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	
Band 2 Simple/Generalised 6–10 marks 'Simple' work is shown when students write in an unelaborated and basic way in relation to the task. 'Generalised' work is shown when students write without regard to particular details.	AO5	simple and generalised response to the debate set up in the task	This band is characterised by simple and generalised work which is mainly linked to the task. 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. At the bottom of the band there will be inconsistency, but the beginnings of a simple and generalised understanding.
	AO4	simple exploration of connections across literary texts arising out of generic study	
	AO3	- simple understanding of the significance of relevant contexts in relation to the task - generalised connections between those contexts and the genre studied	
	AO2	- simple understanding of authorial methods in relation to the task - generalised engagement with how meanings are shaped by the methods used	
	AO1	- 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	

Band 1 Largely irrelevant/largely misunderstood/largely inaccurate 1–5 marks ‘Largely irrelevant’ work is shown when students write in an unclear way with only occasional reference to what is required by the question. ‘Largely misunderstood’ and ‘largely inaccurate’ work is shown when knowledge of the text is insecure, hazy and often wrong.		• 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	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. 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. At the bottom of the band there will be no connection with the task; the writing will be hard to follow and irrelevant.
0 marks		No marks for response when nothing is written or where response has no connection to the text(s) or task.	

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
- the interaction between Othello and Desdemona
- 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 aside observing the flirtatious behaviour of Cassio and Desdemona to Othello's arrival at Cyprus having defeated the Turks, underscoring his heroic attributes; the intensely joyful delight as Desdemona and Othello are reunited and Othello's speech marking the celebratory mood, about to be dreadfully reversed; further development of Iago's villainy as he sees a potential opportunity to incriminate Cassio in the aside; the extravagant exchanges from Othello and Desdemona affirming their love and their sealing it with a kiss in front of the onlookers; Iago undermining their love by his menacing aside to 'set down the pegs that make this music'; Othello signalling a mood of peaceful celebration that has portentous tragic irony for the audience
- the contextualisation of the extract: before the extract, Desdemona's and Iago's witty exchange about the role of women while they await Othello's arrival; after the extract, Iago's manipulation of Roderigo by suggesting that Desdemona does not truly love Othello and is more interested in Cassio
- the viciousness and malice of Iago in his intention to 'ensnare' Cassio
- the use of the aside at the start and end of the extract to present Iago's villainy – which remains hidden to the characters but is apparent to the audience
- the presentation of Iago's villainy in its early stages as the plan is beginning to be formed
- Iago's unsettling isolation from the rest of the characters as he delivers his aside
- Iago's sinister malice as a contrast to the way he presents to other characters
- the use of Iago's lines to provide stage directions for what Cassio and Desdemona are doing as he comments on it

- the joyful nature of the reunion between Othello and Desdemona
- the unusual nature of Othello's greeting to Desdemona of 'fair warrior' showing her as strong and full of fortitude, or Othello's narrowly militaristic way of engaging with the world of the play
- the portentous observation from Othello that this moment he and Desdemona have will be the happiest they ever have
- Desdemona's certainty that the gods will see their love flourish, and the tragic irony of this reassurance to Othello
- the physical demonstration of Othello and Desdemona's love when they kiss
- Othello's dominance of the scene and his setting the tone for joyful celebration that will be cruelly undone by Iago later in the play
- the presence of Montano, Emilia, Cassio, Roderigo and Iago on stage as onlookers during the reunion
- the short-sightedness of Cassio in playing the courtly lover to Desdemona
- the action having moved to Cyprus
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

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

- the tragic aspect of villainy as presented in Iago's plan to manipulate Cassio and bring down Othello
- the tragic aspect of victims who will be made to suffer by the actions of the villain
- the tragic aspect of the hero on the verge of falling from grace
- 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 moral context of Iago's villainy and the callousness he shows towards others
- the context of the affections as seen in the loving reunion between Othello and Desdemona
- the cultural context of courtly behaviour that Cassio shows to Desdemona which hatches Iago's plan to ensnare him
- 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 extract showing Iago's villainy and plotting through his commentary on Cassio and Desdemona, the anticipation of Othello's arriving and his dominating the rest of the extract; the shift in tone from Iago's villainy at the start to the joyful end, suggesting comfort and the absence of threats as they head for the citadel
- the public setting with officials assembled to discuss and await news of Othello's fleet
- the use of entrances, exits, asides, speeches, eg Othello's entrance and his speeches in his characterisation as a tragic hero, Iago's asides and his remaining onstage alone with Roderigo at the end of the extract
- the use of dramatic irony in relation to the presentation of Iago's villainy
- the use of dramatised actions relayed by Iago in his aside, eg 'takes her by the palm' and 'smile upon her'
- the use of shared lines in relation to Iago's villainy, or Desdemona's interaction with Othello

- the use of stage business to convey action, eg the kiss between Othello and Desdemona or the trumpets announcing Othello's arrival, the implied stage directions sending Iago to unload the ship, 'disembark my coffers'
- the use of elevated diction and imagery in Othello's speeches, eg 'labouring bark', 'Olympus high', lexical fields of love and joy, and of divine power, the use of apostrophe and exclamations, the use of diminutives and affectionate names between Othello and Desdemona, the use of imperatives
- the use of oppositions and repetitions, eg Othello's 'am cruel yet merciful' and the near echo of Emilia's lines 'My lord, my lord!' to Desdemona's as she attempts to gain entry
- 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
- the ways the Fool responds to 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: from Lear's first entrance into the storm, raging against its power and claiming to be impervious to it; the Fool's presence undercutting the intensity of Lear's raging and offering wry commentary on Lear's behaviour and actions; Lear then interpreting the storm as a joint punishment from the gods now in league with his daughters; the Fool urging Lear to seek shelter and illustrating this through a bawdy song; to Kent finding Lear and the Fool on the heath in the storm and the Fool summing up the folly of Lear's behaviour
- the contextualisation of the extract: prior to the extract, 3.1 is setting the scene for Lear's presence in the storm scene, with Kent and a Gentleman discussing the storm, and the discord in the polity, and follows on from the end of 2.4 when Kent went to seek Lear after he stormed out of Gloucester's palace; after the extract, Kent persuading Lear to take shelter from the storm and Lear finding a degree of compassion for the Fool, and the scene ending with the Fool's prophecy
- Lear as a tragic victim of cruel treatment by his vicious daughters
- Lear as full of hubris commanding the weather and raging at his unjust treatment
- Lear's immense suffering
- Lear's apocalyptic vision of a destroyed world
- Lear having fallen from greatness
- Lear's physical struggle against the power of the storm
- the turmoil in Lear's mind being reflected in the violence of the storm
- this scene as the beginning of Lear's weakening, of his 'cracking and breaking'
- the absurdity and ridiculousness of Lear raging against the storm

- the fittingness of Lear's self-description of himself as 'A poor, infirm, weak, and despised old man'
- the Fool's role in presenting Lear as foolish, and himself as wise
- the Fool's closeness to Lear, eg his terms of familiar address such as 'nuncle'
- the Fool's detachment from Lear's situation and his speeches as a guide for the audience
- the Fool's derisive comments about Lear suggest that he lacks sympathy for Lear
- Kent's entrance as proof that Lear will no longer be isolated
- the challenge of staging the storm scene
- the motif of 'nothing' signifying what Lear has lost
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

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

- the tragic aspect of suffering as seen in Lear's raging against the storm
- the tragic aspect of a fall from greatness as seen in Lear's loss of status, magnificence and composure
- the aspect of being a tragic victim, as seen in Lear's vulnerability on the heath
- the tragic aspect of isolation as seen in Lear being alone on the heath with only the Fool for company
- 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 Lear's suffering and the emotional turmoil he exhibits
- the political context of his loss of power and the destabilised nature of the state
- the social context of the heartless treatment of an old, vulnerable man having been abandoned by his daughters
- the literary context of the unusual presence of the Fool in a tragedy
- 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 aspects of this scene linking to his exit in 2.4 out into the storm and the subsequent scenes where he takes shelter from the storm; the structural link between the physical storm and Lear's psychological turmoil; this scene as a key moment in Lear's descending into madness and his breakdown; the structural contrast between Lear and the Fool in presenting Lear's madness
- the use of setting, eg the storm as having literal and metaphorical significance in the play
- the use of entrances, exits, speeches, eg Lear's dominating the scene – he has the longest speeches and the most lines, Kent's entrance
- the contrasting speech patterns between interlocutors: Lear's elevated exclamatory verse
- the use of sound effects and visual imagery to create the impression of the storm
- the use of costume and physical comedy to indicate roles, eg the Fool's costume and the running gag about Lear's crown ('good headpiece') set up in 1.4
- the use of bawdy humour in the Fool's lines to point up the absurdity of Lear's predicament, and the use of song
- the use of the motifs and imagery, eg 'nothing', or natural imagery in relation to Lear's suffering, eg 'cataracts and hurricanoes'

- the use of literary features, eg apostrophe, parallelism, the use of language features, eg exclamations, imperatives, diminutives
- 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 ‘Richard is a proud and shallow tragic protagonist’.

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. Some ideas will inevitably address more than one AO.

Examiners must also remember that because students have read and studied *Richard II* through the lens of **tragedy**, the AOs 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 Richard is proud of his status as king, eg at Flint Castle at 3.3 as he considers his position: ‘Swell’st thou, proud heart? I’ll give thee scope to beat’
- that Richard is proud of the power he has as king to act as he sees fit, eg the murder of Woodstock, the seizing of Gaunt’s lands
- that Richard is shallow because he disregards all other concerns, eg isolating himself with his favourites at 1.4 for his own gratification
- that Richard is shallow in his contemptuous treatment of people, eg his comments to Gaunt on his deathbed – ‘a lunatic, lean-witted fool’
- that Richard is proud in his role as king and does not understand the will of the people and the nobles when they side with Bolingbroke
- that Richard’s focus is on material things and this indicates shallowness, eg his listing of his possessions as he negotiates giving up the crown with Northumberland in 3.3 – ‘my jewels,’ ‘my gorgeous palace,’ ‘my gay apparel,’ ‘my figured goblets,’ ‘my large kingdom’
- the elevated rhetoric of comparing himself to Jesus Christ, Phaeton, and a ‘lion’ indicates his proud self-image
- the ironic way with which Richard engages with the deposition indicates that he is proud of his position as king
- that at his deposition, he proudly rejects Bolingbroke as a rightful king, believing himself to be the only ‘true king’
- that at his deposition, he understands that he can either be king or nothing (‘for I must nothing be’) suggesting shallowness about what he can do
- etc.

Some students might consider:

- that Richard's magnificent suffering shows that he is neither shallow nor proud when he equates loss of kingship with self-obliteration: 'for I must nothing be'
- that Richard is not proud but humbled by his semi-divine status, as at his deposition when he describes himself as 'a traitor to myself' for giving up the crown, showing him to be loyal to the crown rather than shallow
- the sustained nature of self-reflection in the second half of the play characterises Richard as 'deep' rather than shallow, eg the rhetorical flourishes and elevated tone he adopts
- the intense reaction he has to being deposed highlights that Richard is proud but not shallow, as in the symbolism of the 'deep well' and 'two buckets' – the one representing Richard is 'down, unseen and full of water'
- that Richard's reaching out to the groom in 5.5 shows that he is no longer proud nor shallow: 'gentle friend'
- Richard's death scene as depth of character and nobleness of spirit rather than pride or shallowness as he fights off his attackers
- Richard's belief in his own greatness is not pride but justified because it is greatness invested by God: 'Mount, mount, my soul; thy seat is up on high,/Whilst my gross flesh sinks downward, here to die'
- etc.

Students may legitimately argue that Richard is proud but not shallow, or engage with either proud or shallow separately or engage with them holistically.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

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

- the aspect of pride as shown in Richard's belief in his own infallibility
- the aspect of tragic flaws as shown in Richard's being shallow or proud
- the aspect of the tragic protagonist falling from grace as seen in Richard's fall
- 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 psychological context of pride and shallowness being 'flaws'
- the political context of how a monarch is expected to behave as seen in Bolingbroke's challenge to Richard for his flawed kingship
- 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 bi-partite structure of the play with Richard's pride and shallowness being presented in the first phase and his magnificence in the second phase; the escalating actions that present Richard's character in relation to pride or shallowness, eg his treatment of Bolingbroke and Mowbray in 1.1 and 1.3, Richard's return from Ireland in 3.2, his loss of the crown in 3.3 and 4.1

- the use of settings in relation to pride or shallowness, eg his royal court in London with his favourites, or Flint Castle or Pomfret Castle
- the speeches of Richard in relation to pride and shallowness, eg his speech at 3.2 near Harlech Castle
- the use of voices and dialogue in relation to pride and shallowness, eg Gaunt, York, Northumberland
- the use of motifs, symbols and images, in relation to pride and shallowness, eg tears, death and disease, the sun and water, height and depth
- 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 significance of dreams to the tragedy of *Death of a Salesman*.

Remember to include in your answer relevant comments 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 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 ideology of the American Dream and how it informs the actions and attitudes of the characters; the impact of the American Dream on an ordinary family
- the unstructured nature of dreams in the play: Willy's 'mobile concurrences' that present Willy's aspirations for the future and memories of the past; daydreams; dream-like recollections; imagined projections of the future; nightmarish visions of what has gone wrong with his life or his sons' lives, etc
- the focus on Willy's dreams being framed through his thoughts about suicide in the present
- dreams being used to intensify the suffering of Willy Loman and his family
- Willy's dreams of success leading to his frustrated aspirations and ambitions and causing suffering
- Willy's dreams of being well-liked causing him suffering through the degrading treatment he receives at work
- Willy's dreams of finding wealth in the wilderness leading to financial insecurity for Linda
- the characterisation of others through Willy's dreams, eg his sons, or Ben
- the inadequacy and insubstantiality of Willy's dreams, eg his inability to prepare his sons for capitalist economics: 'the trouble is we weren't brought up to grub for money. I don't know how to do it'
- Willy's dreams of Ben's offering promises of luck and prosperity that juxtapose with the impoverished present
- Willy's dreams giving him a sense of greatness in his hopes for life
- Willy's dreams of his celebrated life affirm his perception of his self-worth, eg when he imagines the 'massive' funeral
- that Willy's dreams offer hope of a better future, rather than suffering, eg getting a 'little place in the country'
- Willy's dreams as resulting in financial security for Linda because she gets the insurance money to pay off the mortgage
- Willy's dreams of the past as being idealised and a source of comfort so not causing suffering, eg remembering Biff at the football match

- 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 suffering caused by his unattainable dreams as shown in the emotional pain of Linda and Willy, eg her 'iron repression'
- the aspect of tragic isolation as shown in the detached way Willy's dreams are presented
- the aspect of tragic victims as shown in the way characters are presented as brought down, or overwhelmed by life events, as a result of his unfulfilled dreams, eg Willy's suicide
- 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 dreams
- the cultural context of the American Dream and how it fosters aspiration
- the economic context of dreams centred on 'making it big'
- 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 structure of the play and the moments where Willy's dreams and the influence of the American Dream are presented; the interweaving between past and present, imagination and events; key events involving dreams, eg the reappearance of Ben in relation to Willy's dreams of greatness and wealth, the recollections and sequences of interruptions, eg the memory of young Biff, then Ben then Bernard immediately after Willy's being sacked; the use of flashbacks to show Willy's dreams and imagined versions of the past
- the use of imagined and actual settings, such as the house and its immediate locale of 'towering, angular shapes [...] surrounding it on all sides', the restaurant, the hotel room, the Loman's family home
- the use of naturalistic stage directions, lighting, music, or props in relation to dreams or suffering, eg the flute or Ben's music or his 'valise and umbrella'
- the use of characterisation, eg Willy's contrasting with Ben or Charley
- the use of voices and dialogue in relation to delusion or realisation, eg Willy's lengthy speeches when talking to Howard, or the fierce exchanges with Biff, or the pitiful interaction with Charley
- the use of motifs, symbols and images in relation to dreams, eg the diamond, the seeds to be planted in the back yard
- 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 ‘Stanley is a cruel brute – a villain with no redeeming features’.

Remember to include in your answer relevant comments on Williams’ dramatic methods.

[25 marks]

Some possible content is given below. It suggests some of the ways the Assessment Objectives might be addressed. Some ideas will inevitably address more than one AO.

Examiners must also remember that because students have read and studied *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 the despicable cruelty of Stanley’s brutish treatment in raping Blanche is beyond redemption
- that Stanley is cruelly violent in raping Blanche and physically attacking her (‘springs towards her, overturning the table [...] catches her wrist’)
- that Stanley’s refusal to acknowledge Blanche’s clear withholding of consent is brutish, cruel and beyond any redemption
- that Stanley brutishly and unjustifiably diminishes the violence of his actions by labelling his attack as ‘this date’ and thus being beyond redemption
- that Stanley’s menacing intimidation is deeply unsettling for Blanche and beyond redemption
- Stanley’s violent, abusive, coercive relationship with Stella is too brutish to be redeemed
- Stanley’s cruel manipulation of Mitch by revealing Blanche’s lies is beyond redemption
- etc.

Some students might consider:

- Williams’ recorded liking for the character of Stanley resulting in over-emphasis on his redeeming features
- that Stanley is a charismatic and sociable persona and this redeems his villainy
- that Stanley’s animal magnetism is a redeeming feature for Stella in their intense, stormy relationship
- that Stanley’s hard-working ethic and migrant aspiration brings vitality to New Orleans and this redeems his villainy
- that Stanley’s quest to find out the truth about Blanche to protect his friend is ultimately a redeeming feature
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

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

- the aspect of tragic villainy as seen in Stanley's cruelty to Blanche
- the aspect of redemption in tragedies as seen in Stella's forgiveness of Stanley's violence towards her
- the aspect of inevitability as seen in Stanley's assertion that he was going to harm Blanche 'from the beginning'
- 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 historical context of attitudes to gender and gender-based violence when the play was written in 1948
- 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 performance context of Williams selecting Marlon Brando for the part of Stanley in order to give the villain a supposedly attractive quality
- the reception context in the 21st century of reading a play about sexual violence when the actions of the perpetrator go unpunished
- 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 Stanley's villainy in his escalating encounters with Blanche, and with the presentation of her attitude to him, eg Stanley aggressively going through her papers in Scene 2 and then his overhearing her calling him a 'survivor of the Stone Age' in Scene 4 to the confrontations over the birthday supper in Scenes 7 and 8 as a build up to the rape; the use of contrasts between characters or between times and places, eg Stanley's exchanges with Blanche contrasted with his camaraderie with his friends in relation to his villainy or redemption
- the use of settings: New Orleans; the Kowalski's flat and within it the bathroom, the bedroom; the micro-setting of the poker night; the remembered settings of Belle Reve, the seedy Pink Flamingo Hotel, Laurel, in relation to villainy or redemption
- the use of characterisation and contrasts between characters in relation to villainy or redemption, eg the contrast between Stella who is 'sort of-thrilled' by Stanley's violent behaviour contrasted with Blanche's intolerance of it
- the use of dialogue and speeches in relation to villainy or redemption eg Stanley's incriminating revelations about Blanche in Laurel in Scene 7
- the use of entrances and exits, dramatic action, or stage directions in relation to villainy or redemption, eg the 'inhuman jungle noises' or Stanley's 'biting his tongue which protrudes between his lips' in Scene 10
- the use of motifs or symbols or imagery in relation to villainy or redemption, eg the radio, the telephone, the trunk, images of barbarity and civility
- 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.