
AS
ENGLISH LITERATURE B
7716/2B

Paper 2B Literary genres: Prose and Poetry: Aspects of comedy

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](https://www.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 comedy: open 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 open book

Examiners must understand that in marking an open book exam there are examining implications. Students have their texts in front of them, and they are expected to use them to focus on specific passages for detailed discussion. They will not have had to memorise quotations so when quotations are used they should be accurate. Because students have their texts in the examination room, examiners need to be alert to possible malpractice. The texts should not be annotated but if examiners suspect that they have been or that notes from texts have been copied, they must alert the malpractice team.

There are specific issues for AO2 – how meanings are shaped in texts. There is, with open book, the expectation that students can use the text they have in front of them to make specific and detailed reference to structural and organisational issues.

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:

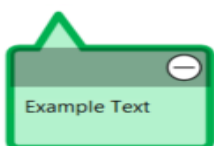
- has the student engaged in a relevant debate or constructed a relevant argument?
- has the student referred to different parts of the text to support their views?
- has the student referred to the author's dramatic method?
- the student's AO1 competence.

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.	

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The Nun's Priest's Tale – Geoffrey Chaucer

Explore the significance of the ending of *The Nun's Priest's Tale* to the comedy of the poem.

In your answer you need to analyse closely Chaucer's authorial methods and include comments on the extract below.

[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 tragedy in the wider poem.

Examiners must also remember that because students have read and studied *The Nun's Priest's Tale* through the lens of **comedy**, the AOs must necessarily be connected to that genre through the task.

Given that this is an **open book** exam, textual references to support comments about the ways meanings are shaped in relation to the task will be expected to be specific and accurate.

Please refer to pages 4–8.

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. Students may choose to look at one significance or several. It is the quality of the student's response that matters.

Some possible ideas:

- in the extract: the denouement of the tale where the action of the tale is crowned by the learning of lessons as seen in Chauntecleer's acceptance of the error of his actions, the crystallising of this journey into a moral voiced by the cockerel, the allying of human growth to God's will, the fox's own growth signifying that comedic villains can develop too, the secondary moral about chattering that emerges from the fox's actions, the narrator's voice reinforcing the moral and shaping it for the pilgrims and the reader, the ending as a piece of moral instruction, the use of religious reference to heighten the ending of the tale and strengthen the lesson
- the ending as a recognisable comedic ending where the protagonist survives and thrives, the danger averted and a sense of uplift occurs
- the communal healing seen in the way adversaries acknowledge their flaws and discuss what they have learned at the end of their stories
- the protagonist as a flawed but resourceful character whose outcome is a happy one, and whose journey during the tale is a type of comedic education
- the quick-thinking nature of the cockerel as a staple feature of comedy whose fleetness of mind results in success by the end of the story
- how comedic characters can bring about their own downfall, the more positive aspects of their personality shine through and save the day in the final analysis
- the resolving of the comedic problem into a comment about human conduct – the manner in which comedic endings can point up a useful life lesson
- the voice of the narrator whose sermonising is absurd given the fact the tale concerns farmyard animals, the undercutting of the moral ending for comic purposes

- the preceding climactic capture and chase scene that sets up Chauntecleer's escape, the dramatic nature of the ending of comedic tales where disaster looms but is narrowly avoided
- the voice of the Host in the epilogue that immediately undercuts the reverential moralising of the Nun's Priest, the comic effect of references to body parts alongside religious ones
- the coarse references in the epilogue and attention drawn to the Nun's Priest's appearance that puncture the pomposity of the ending of Chauntecleer's story
- the manner in which comedy piles joke upon joke, often resulting in comic deflation, questioning the moral released in the tale
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

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

- the comedic aspect of happy, upbeat endings
- the comedic aspect of irony as seen in the voice of the Nun's Priest
- the comedic aspect of personal growth as seen in the lesson learned by Chauntecleer
- 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 contextual issues arising from the text in relation to the question students might focus on:

- the context of morality as seen in the lesson about pride and human conduct that emerges
- the religious context as seen in the references to God and Saint Paul
- the context of power as seen in the positioning of God as the overseer of events and control of human experiences
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

With respect to significance and analysis of authorial methods in relation to the task focus might be on:

- in the extract: the position of the extract at the end of the poem once the climactic phase of the story has passed, its function as the conclusion to the tale and place where the moral lesson is situated, the exchanges of dialogue to shape the story here and show the characters learning lessons, the closing lines given to the Nun's Priest to act as moraliser and act as the bridge between the story of Chauntecleer and the audience, the closing religious lines with their sense of finality
- in the rest of the poem: the way the ending is prepared for, eg the setting up of Chauntecleer's comedic flaw of pride, the pattern of threat, catastrophe and escape that sets up the moral, the establishment of the fox as the comic villain prior to his emergence as a chastened figure in the passage, the epilogue that adds another layer to the story and distances the action while also passing comment on the merry nature of the tale
- various voices, eg the chastened voices of Chauntecleer and Russel as they express the lessons they have learned, their dialogue suggesting a sense of post-conflict peace has settled, the ironic voice of the narrator raising the status of the animal tale to a moral and religious lesson for the world, the elevated nature of the voice for comic effect

- relevant language features, eg words used to describe lessons learned, the religious words used by the narrator
- etc.

Given that this is an **open book** exam, comment on the ways meanings are shaped should be specific and accurate.

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 authorial methods that are embedded into the argument.

0 2

Poetry Anthology: Comedy

Explore the significance of the endings of poems to the comedy of *Poetry Anthology: Comedy*.

You must refer to *Tam o'Shanter. A Tale* and **at least one** other poem.

In your answer you need to analyse closely the poets' authorial methods and include comments on the extract below.

[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 tragedy in the wider poem.

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

Given that this is an **open book** exam, textual references to support comments about the ways meanings are shaped in relation to the task will be expected to be specific and accurate.

Please refer to pages 4–8.

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. Students may choose to look at one significance or several. It is the quality of the student's response that matters.

Some possible ideas:

- in the extract: the climactic chase scene crowning the tale of Tam's foolish behaviour, the threat to the protagonist seen at the end of comedic stories, the role of the comedic villain presenting a mortal threat at the climax of the story, the heroic actions of Meg that save the protagonist, the injury to the horse that slightly jars with the comedic uplift, the escape of Tam showing the good fortune that smiles at the end of comedy, the aversion of death, the moral view voiced by the narrator suggesting that lessons are learned
- the comic absurdity of the ending with its focus on the supernatural, the heroic horse and the drunken protagonist as the conclusion of a tale of drunkenness and temptation
- the suggestion that Tam's escape has nothing to do with his resourcefulness or skill, the role of luck in human endeavour, the final confirmation that he is a likeable fool rather than a hero, the sense that, although the reader may take a lesson from it, Tam doesn't
- the comic gap between the apparent seriousness of the narrator's homily and the ridiculous nature of the tale, the satirising of homiletic endings
- the triumphalist ending of *The Flea* where the narrator offers a witty comeback to crown his argument which is undercut by his partner's crushing of the flea and the uncertainty of his sexual victory
- the moral emerging at the end of *A Satirical Elegy. On the Death of a Late Famous General* which reveals the levelling effect of death and the vacuousness of flatterers and hangers-on, the celebratory address to the mourners and readers – an unusual sense of comedic uplift

- the downbeat ending to *Sunny Prestatyn* that denies a happy ending and shows the destruction of the image on the poster, the anti-comic reference to cancer
- the emotionless bombast of the male speaker in *Not My Best Side* that dismisses the girl's feelings and endorses the social structures, the gap between the speaker's beliefs and the readers leads to a muted ending rather than a sense of uplift
- the lack of release or victory for the narrator of *My Rival's House* who remains trapped in her situation, the suggestion that the narrator longs for her mother-in-law's capitulation, perhaps death, lends a darkly comic edge to the ending
- the isolation of Mrs Sisyphus whose position seems inescapable – no joyful ending for her, the jaded cynicism of her voice in the final stanza may prove amusing
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

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

- the comedic aspect of happy, upbeat endings
- the comedic aspect of absurdity as seen in the drunken Tam being chased by a supernatural entity
- the comedic aspect of entertainment as seen in the dramatic and amusing ending
- 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 contextual issues arising from the text in relation to the question students might focus on:

- the context of power as seen in the threat of Nannie and the powerless position of Tam
- the contexts of gender and sexuality as seen in the drunken desires of Tam
- the moral context as seen in the lesson the narrator offers the reader
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

With respect to significance and analysis of authorial methods in relation to the task focus might be on:

- in the extract: the position of the extract at the end of the poem as the climactic part of the tale, the dramatic sequence of the chase and escape narrative, the management of tension and release, the positioning of the characters and their outcomes, eg Meg's injury, Nannie's defeat and Tam's lucky escape, the placing of the happy outcome at the end of the story, the function of the concluding stanza where the narrator acts as moraliser and addresses the reader directly and explicitly points out the lesson to be heeded
- in the rest of the poem: the setting up of the story elements that are dealt with in the ending, eg the establishment of Tam's flaw and his drunken misjudgement, the introduction of the supernatural comedic villain figure, the initiation of the chase sequence
- in other poems: the witty retort of the narrator of *The Flea* to his would-be lover's actions crowning the argument, the moral lesson placed at the end of *A Satirical Elegy. On the Death of a Late Famous General*, the concluding image of the defaced and replaced poster in *Sunny Prestatyn*, the final stanza given over to the unsympathetic boy in *Not My Best Side*, the bitter conclusions to the story of *My Rival's House* and *Mrs Sisyphus* where happy endings are withheld

- various voices, eg the witty, self-satisfied but perhaps desperate voice at the end of *The Flea*, the serious and strident voice at the end of *A Satirical Elegy. On the Death of a Late Famous General*, the earthy but increasingly downbeat voice at the end of *Sunny Prestatyn*, the arrogant, emotionless final speaker in *Not My Best Side*, the embittered voice throughout *My Rival's House*, the coarse, amusing but defeated voice that concludes *Mrs Sisyphus*
- relevant language features, eg words used to express a range of emotions, imperatives to deliver moral messages from narrators
- etc.

Given that this is an **open book** exam, comment on the ways meanings are shaped should be specific and accurate.

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 authorial methods that are embedded into the argument.

0 3

Betjeman selection – John Betjeman

Explore the significance of the endings of poems to the comedy of *Betjeman selection*.

You must refer to *A Subaltern's Love-song* and **at least one** other poem.

In your answer you need to analyse closely Betjeman's authorial methods and include comments on the extract below.

[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 tragedy in the wider poem.

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

Given that this is an **open book** exam, textual references to support comments about the ways meanings are shaped in relation to the task will be expected to be specific and accurate.

Please refer to pages 4–8.

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. Students may choose to look at one significance or several. It is the quality of the student's response that matters.

Some possible ideas:

- in the extract: the gathering climax of the love story between the narrator and Miss Dunn, the excitable nature of the narrator's voice as the situation develops to a climax, the enclosed setting and the romantic tension that builds at the end of the poem, the slightly downbeat reference to ominous dancing that jars slightly and plays against the comedic ending, the unspoken nature of their time in the car suggesting romantic liaison as the crowning feature of the love story, the final line as the clinching moment of the romance
- the journey in the narrative that ends in unity, the comedic harmony emerging at the conclusion of the poem suggesting triumph
- the elliptical final lines that might suggest a troubling note, as if the narrator realises the enormity of his commitment, a more ambiguous ending to the comedy
- the downbeat ending of *The Arrest of Oscar Wilde at the Cadogan Hotel* where Wilde's removal punctures the comedy of manners and raises the serious issue of law and persecution
- the throwaway comic line at the end of *In Westminster Abbey* that confirms the selfish, superficial nature of the speaker, the bathetic contrast between the preceding topics of war and religion and the final line's reference to lunch
- the uplifting reference to God and the religious meaning emerging in *Christmas*, the joyous submission of the speaker at the end of *The Licorice Fields at Pontefract*, the release seen at the end of *Slough* which envisions a new beginning, the quiet rapture felt by the speaker in *Lenten Thoughts of a High Anglican* emphasising the delight of attraction
- the unhappy position of the narrator at the end of *Senex* whose inability to control his ardour causes him to seek divine help, the misery seen at the end of *Late-Flowering Lust* where the

narrator feels disgust at his thoughts and physical appearance, the references to death and decay in *On a Portrait of a Deaf Man* which offer no uplift

- the comically violent ending of *Hunter Trials* that completes the poem's story and confirms the speaker as an unaware young woman
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

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

- the comedic aspect of happy, upbeat endings
- the comedic aspect of amusement as seen in the entertaining voice of the excited narrator
- the comedic aspect of romance as seen in the relationship explored in the passage
- 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 contextual issues arising from the text in relation to the question students might focus on:

- the context of human affections as seen in the emotions expressed in the named poem
- the context of social class as seen in the representation of upper middle-class England
- the cultural context as seen in the various time-bound references to entertainment and transport
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

With respect to significance and analysis of authorial methods in relation to the task focus might be on:

- in the extract: the position of the extract at the end of the poem capping the love story, the excitable voice of the narrator delivering the conclusion to the romance, the placing of the engagement in the last line of the poem, the interior setting of the car, the narrative gap that precedes it and the slightly less upbeat references to the ominous dancing, the driving rhythm, full rhyme and couplets that underscore the joy in the narrator's voice, the range of details about Miss Dunn and the repetition of her name
- in the rest of the poem: the preparation for the poem's ending, eg the opening line apostrophising Miss Dunn and the subsequent repetition of her name setting up the narrator's feelings, the use of the tennis match in the opening as a way of positioning the characters in a type of contest, the single day setting of the story that builds up to the late night conclusion, the fast-paced and giddy account of events aided by the rhythm and rhyme
- in other poems: the contrast between the comic depiction of the policemen and the less comic arrest concluding *The Arrest of Oscar Wilde at the Cadogan Hotel*, the pleasant pastoral conclusions to *Upper Lambourne* and *Ireland with Emily*, the comic payoff at the end of *In Westminster Abbey*, the uplifting religious ending of *Christmas*, the grotesquely amusing but downbeat voices in *Senex*, *Late-Flowering Lust* and *On a Portrait of a Deaf Man*
- various voices, eg the grimly amusing voice in *Slough*, the comic silly voice expressing disappointment at the end of *Hunter Trials*, the smug voice of *Executive*
- relevant language features, eg words used to describe feelings and thoughts in the concluding sections of the poems, words connected with despair in *Late-Flowering Lust*, religious references in *Christmas* and *Lenten Thoughts of a High Anglican*

- etc.

Given that this is an **open book** exam, comment on the ways meanings are shaped should be specific and accurate.

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 authorial methods that are embedded into the argument.

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Emma – Jane Austen

Explore the view that ‘Mr and Mrs Elton are simply figures of fun’.

Remember to include in your answer relevant analysis of Austen’s authorial 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 *Emma* through the lens of **comedy**, the AOs must necessarily be connected to that genre through the task.

Given that this is an **open book** exam, textual references to support comments about the ways meanings are shaped in relation to the task will be expected to be specific and accurate.

Please refer to pages 4–8.

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 presentation of Mr and Mrs Elton as figures of fun throughout the novel, the narrator’s description of them as obvious sources of ridicule
- Mr Elton as a pompous character whose manner and self-regard are the source of much laughter, his recognisable comic flaws are amusing for the reader
- the hilarious way his behaviour contrasts with his religious position, his lack of Christian virtue, his designs for advancement through marriage, his toadying behaviour towards Emma all provide humour and entertaining commentary on human conduct
- the comic scene where Emma rejects Mr Elton’s advances, the hilarity arising from his humiliation, the manner in which he quickly leaves Highbury with his wounded pride amuse the reader on account of the puncturing of his hopes and the sight of an unsympathetic character getting his comeuppance
- Mrs Elton as a vulgar, arrogant character whose outrageous manner provide much hilarity for the reader, her role as a kind of comic villain set up in opposition to Emma, the irony of her dislike of ‘upstarts’
- the amusing way in which she loudly displays her lack of discernment, her over-the-top manner, lack of social grace and desire to monopolise social occasions provoke much amusement for the reader
- the humour arising from her conflict with Emma, the way in which she grates on Emma, her patronage of Jane Fairfax provide an amusing commentary and gross parallel on the shortcomings of the heroine herself
- the hilarious concluding words of Mrs Elton in the final chapter, her dismissive view of Emma’s wedding, the entertaining jealousy she displays, the sense that she is defeated by Emma all cause amusement for the reader
- etc.

Some students might consider:

- Mr Elton's manner that ill suits a man of the cloth, his apparent abandonment of his parishioners in order to be around Emma suggest a character provoking censure rather than hilarity
- Mr Elton's behaviour as a criticism of human flaws, his self-regard and desire for social advancement suggest a character who is far from comic – a dislikeable, self-serving one who readers view as despicable rather than amusing
- the incident in the carriage with Emma isn't a cause for hilarity – Mr Elton's manner and presence in the enclosed setting have a sense of threat for the heroine, his reaction is jarring rather than comic
- Mrs Elton as an unsympathetic, annoying character whose brash manner and sense of self-worth provokes censure rather than amusement for the reader
- the disgust felt by Mr Knightley at the treatment of Harriet by the Eltons at the ball is shared by the reader, Mrs Elton's nastiness and manipulation of situations and ludicrous belief that she alone knows Jane's secret, her function as an obstacle to conversation between Emma and Jane are not amusing for the reader – she grates on them and is viewed with disgust
- Mrs Elton's presence at the end of the novel as commentator on Emma's wedding outfit is jarring rather than hilarious, she brings a negative quality to the end of the story that isn't a cause for humour
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

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

- the comedic aspects of the ridiculousness and mockery as seen in the depiction of the Eltons
- the comedic aspect of satire as seen in the implied criticism of a man of the cloth
- the comedic aspect of outrageousness as seen in the behaviour of Mrs Elton
- 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 novel in relation to the question, focus might be on:

- the social and cultural context as seen in the way the Eltons conduct themselves in the world of the text
- the context of gender as seen in the female competitiveness between Mrs Elton and Emma
- the context of power as seen in the status of Mrs Elton which is later curtailed
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

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

- the introduction of Mr Elton in the early phase of the novel as a supposed match for Harriet, the reader's superior knowledge of his true interest marking him out as a figure of fun, the various events that make him appear silly and fawning, eg his writing of the riddle, his spying on her, which build up to his amusing rejection, the introduction of Mrs Elton in the second volume, the way she is positioned as a rival to Emma, the series of events that reinforce her outrageous behaviour in social situations

- the ending of the novel in which Mrs Elton emerges as an increasingly ludicrous figure, the last words given to her as a commentator on Emma's wedding, her position at the end as an amusingly bitter character – a defeated comic villain
- the structural contrast between the politesse of the Eltons, the fawning, self-interested, brash public displays and the expected social etiquette they transgress marking them out for ridicule, the placing of Mrs Elton as comic obstacle and parallel to Emma, pointing her up as a figure of fun
- climactic moments in the novel, eg Mr Elton's humiliation in the carriage followed by his hasty departure
- various dialogue between Mr Elton and Emma in which his intentions are lost on Emma but noted by the reader, the emotional exchange in the carriage where the drink-fuelled Elton amusingly loses his cool, his entertaining snobbery towards Harriet, Mrs Elton's lengthy and calculated pronouncements on Jane in front of Emma, her snobbish final words
- relevant language features, words used to reveal ridiculous aspects of character, the testy exclamations of Mr Elton, the supercilious words of Mrs Elton
- etc.

Given that this is an **open book** exam, comment on the ways meanings are shaped should be specific and accurate.

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 authorial methods that are embedded into the argument.

0 5

Small Island – Andrea Levy

Explore the view that ‘readers laugh at Hortense rather than sympathise with her’.

Remember to include in your answer relevant analysis of Levy’s authorial 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 *Small Island* through the lens of **comedy**, the AOs must necessarily be connected to that genre through the task.

Given that this is an **open book** exam, textual references to support comments about the ways meanings are shaped in relation to the task will be expected to be specific and accurate.

Please refer to pages 4–8.

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 laughter generated by Hortense’s unrealistic expectations of life in England and the grim reality she encounters, the rundown nature of the accommodation she shares with Gilbert, the rain and darkness all puncture her misguided notions
- her horrified reaction to Gilbert’s initial attempts at lovemaking, her squeamish reaction, the manner in which she describes Gilbert’s body all invite the reader to laugh at her
- the bathetic nature of her experiences in England – making chips, the privations, the rats, the manner in which she is regarded operate in contrast to her refined manner and cause laughter at her expense
- the haughty voice and actions of Hortense, her sense of superiority, her despair at Gilbert’s character, her belief that she speaks perfect English yet her dialogue and voice suggests otherwise
- her prissy qualities, her belief that she is the star pupil at her school, her refined dress sense, the condescending way she regards the children at the Ryders’ school makes her appear faintly ridiculous
- her failed attempt to be a teacher in England, the amusing disappointment as her dreams are dashed, her walking into the cupboard – the physical comedy invites laughter at her expense
- her role at the birth of baby Michael, the afterbirth smearing her wedding dress, her outrage when she assumes Gilbert is the father – the grotesque scene and mistaken assumptions are a cause for laughter
- her romantic feelings towards Michael Roberts, her failure to see his comedic villain qualities, the affair he has with Mrs Ryder, her failure to grasp what missing in action means, make Hortense a laughing stock
- etc.

Some students might consider:

- the sadness of Hortense’s life in England – her dreams of a new and better life are initially dashed, her marriage is a disappointing sham, her accommodation is dispiriting, all reasons for sympathy

- her adoption of baby Michael is a heroic act and one which presents her as a sympathetic figure, a rescuer who is willing to do the right thing
- her emergence as a character who develops during the novel, her haughtiness replaced by a much more likeable nature, her position at the end of the story is that of a character who invites sympathy
- her part in the optimistic ending of the story where her relationship with Gilbert has grown, she acquires a new house and child, her role in the symbolic development of the country and the sense that she represents a new beginning mark her out as a character who readers sympathise with
- the pity felt by the reader when her teaching hopes are dashed, her humiliation and embarrassment when she steps into the cupboard provoke sympathy rather than laughter
- the deep feelings she has for Michael Roberts in spite of his misbehaviour, her tears for him suggest a character that the reader doesn't laugh at, but instead feels sympathy for
- etc.

Answers may legitimately deal with Hortense as a character and/or narrator and arguments may vary depending upon whether the student deals with sections narrated by Hortense and/or other characters.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

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

- the comedic aspect of laughter as seen in the reaction to Hortense's comic flaws
- the comedic aspect of the sympathetic and ultimately victorious protagonist
- the comedic aspect of sex as seen in Hortense's varying responses to Gilbert's advances
- 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 novel in relation to the question, focus might be on:

- the social and historical context as seen in the arrival of Hortense in England
- the context of power as seen in the way in which Hortense's assumptions about her status are challenged by the reality and disappointment of her new life
- the context of human affections as seen in Hortense's feelings for Gilbert and Michael Roberts
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

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

- the sequence and placing of various events of Hortense's life, eg the establishment of her feelings for Michael Roberts, and the sadness that these cause prior to her meeting with Gilbert, the building up of her expectations as a comic pattern prior to her deflating arrival in England, the staging points in her development, eg her rejection as a teacher in England, her realisation of Gilbert's positive qualities
- the position of Hortense at the end of the novel as a victor and a comedic character whose personal development results in happiness, her place in the comedic resolution and wider emblem of a new beginning in English culture

- the depiction of Hortense through the voice of Gilbert, the comic material arising from his account of her prissiness, his affection and exasperation at her that the reader partly shares, his amusingly warm account of their happy ending
- the voice of Hortense which is by turns naïve, haughty and increasingly mature, her hilarious reaction to Gilbert's advances, the inexact nature of what she considers her perfect diction, the more measured and reflective voice seen in the final chapter, her role as the last narrator in the novel suggesting her ascendancy
- the pairing of Hortense and Gilbert as a kind of comic double act, her pretentiousness and naïvety pointed up by their contrasts, the marital sparring and badinage, the shedding of the double act trope in the end for something more akin to a loving partnership
- relevant language features, eg Gilbert's fondly mocking term 'Miss Mucky Foot', the amusingly (im)precise diction of Hortense
- etc.

Given that this is an **open book** exam, comment on the ways meanings are shaped should be specific and accurate.

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 authorial methods that are embedded into the argument.

0 6

Wise Children – Angela Carter

Explore the significance of the events that take place in America to the comedy of *Wise Children*.

Remember to include in your answer relevant analysis of Carter's authorial 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 *Wise Children* through the lens of **comedy**, the AOs must necessarily be connected to that genre through the task.

Given that this is an **open book** exam, textual references to support comments about the ways meanings are shaped in relation to the task will be expected to be specific and accurate.

Please refer to pages 4–8.

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. Students may choose to look at one significance or several. It is the quality of the student's response that matters.

Some possible ideas:

- the entertaining voice of Dora recounting the glamour and excitement of the filming trip to Hollywood, the comedic uplift the trip brings to the lives of Dora and Nora, a moment of triumph in their story as they arrive and cameras flash upon their arrival in New York, an upbeat event following their years of low-key entertainment work
- the setting of Hollywood as a larger-than-life place where transformation and magical moments are possible, the comedic freedom it lends to the girls, its function as a type of green world
- the carnivalesque account of Hollywood and the journey across America that presents the trip as a romp – the fast-moving nature of events and the glitz create an upbeat comedic feel
- the absurd nature of the urn's journey, the replacement of its contents with earth from the hotel garden, Melchior's ridiculous toting of the urn and his accompanying speech make for a ludicrous comic moment
- the hilarity of the pretence of Melchior's vision, its amusing undercutting by the reader's knowledge of its true contents, the smutty account of the bulge in his tights causing filming to cease
- the transformative and illusory nature of role-playing, both in *The Dream* and in the characters' personal lives, the spontaneous love-making between Melchior and Daisy, the artifice of Hollywood and its sets that undercut the upbeat glamour
- the amusingly caricatured Hollywood figures – Genghis Khan in his jodhpurs, Daisy Duck as the hard-boiled starlet, the oversexed Puck – alongside the pretentious Melchior adds to the comedy of the scene
- the inclusion of romantic and sexual relationships, Dora's affair with Irish, the excess of Genghis and Daisy's wedding night, Daisy falling pregnant, the three engagements
- the anti-comic events that work against the superficial glitz – Peregrine's sudden disappearance, the end of Dora's relationship, the worry about Grandma Chance, the failure of George's humour, the failure of the film

- the element of disguise as seen in Dora's appropriation of the Bottom costume, Peregrine dressed as the sheriff of Hazard, Genghis' first wife dressed as Dora
- the ending of the American jaunt which despite the celebrations has an undertone of melancholy as seen in Dora's feelings of sadness, the avoidance of marriages, the tipping of sauce over Nora, the revelation that Daisy is not pregnant, the quiet return of Melchior to London
- the romantic and tragic nature of earlier events in America – the love triangle of Ranulph, Estella and Cassius that ends in death, the escape of Peregrine from his strict aunt, Dora's romanticising of Melchior's journey to England
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

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

- the comedic aspect of absurdity as seen in the various ridiculous events depicted
- the comedic aspect of the entertaining narrator who presents experiences in an amusing way
- the comedic aspects of entertainment as seen in the carnivalesque events
- 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 contextual issues arising from the text in relation to the question students might focus on:

- the context of gender as seen in the representation of Melchior as a pompous patriarch
- the context of power as seen in the ways in which Melchior's supposed status is undermined
- the moral context as seen in the sexual conduct of various characters
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

With respect to significance and analysis of authorial methods in relation to the task focus might be on:

- the function of events in America as a high point in the recollections of Dora, the central act in Carter's five-act structure which acts as a turning point in the fortunes of Melchior, the carnivalesque procession of events, the fast-moving sense of excitement, the cast of characters – all shaped to present a sense of a magical point in the life stories of the main characters
- the ending of the American sequence running counter to the comedic spirit where the carnival seems to end, the placing of several less happy events together, eg the cancelled marriages, the film's failure
- the amusing voice of Dora recounting events in a sprawling fashion moving from arrival in New York, the glitz of Hollywood, the bathetic shifts when recounting smutty and scatological moments, the shift to more reflective moments on her relationship with Irish
- the symbol of the forest and Hollywood at the heart of the film scene, a place of transformation – a sort of anti-comic green world after which things worsen for the characters
- the use of bathos and pointed contrasts to undercut the pomposity of the film, eg the urn, sexual antics and kitsch nature of the film alongside the supposedly revered work of the bard
- relevant language features, eg the earthy words used to recount events, the conversational words that paint events in a comic light
- etc.

Given that this is an **open book** exam, comment on the ways meanings are shaped should be specific and accurate.

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 authorial methods that are embedded into the argument.