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**AS**  
**ENGLISH LITERATURE B**  
**(7716/1A)**

Paper 1A: Literary Genres: Aspects of Tragedy

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Mark scheme

Specimen Material

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Version/Stage: Version 3.0

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

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

Further copies of this Mark Scheme are available from [aqa.org.uk](http://aqa.org.uk)

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## 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: Section B

Examiners must understand that in marking a Closed Book exam there are examining implications. Candidates 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, candidates may range broadly across their texts as they construct their arguments.

There are specific issues for AO2 – how meanings are shaped in texts. There is, with Closed Book, the expectation that candidates 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 5) and be careful not to over/under credit a particular skill. In all questions more weight should be given to AO1, AO2 and AO3 than to AO4 and AO5. 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 candidates 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 candidates 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 candidates 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. Candidates’ 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 candidate 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 may 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 7. 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 candidate have an overview of the extract?
  - has the candidate written about dramatic method?
  - has the candidate quoted from the extract to support ideas?
  - the candidate's AO1 competence.

### Section B

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

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

### 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 candidate performance.
16. Please remember that scripts can go back to candidates, so although your audience is a senior examiner, you must express your views temperately.
17. The following symbols can be used when marking scripts:
  - tick for a good point, idea, reference etc
  - tick in brackets for a potentially good point, not fully made
  - underlining for an error in fact or expression
  - D when a candidate is describing content
  - R for repetition
  - I for irrelevance
  - ? for when meaning is not clear.

Please do not use your own private systems, as these will mean nothing to senior examiners. If in doubt about what to use, simply write clear comments.

18. Use the Model Marked Script for guidance.

### The Assessment Objectives and their significance

19. All questions are framed to test AOs 2, 3, 4 and 5, so if candidates answer the question, then they will be addressing the AOs. In marking questions, however, examiners must also take account of AO1, which tests more than technical accuracy.

The AOs are as follows:

- AO1** Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression. (28%)
- AO2** Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts. (24%)
- AO3** Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received. (24%)
- AO4** Explore connections across literary texts. (12%)
- AO5** Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations. (12%)

## **Mark Scheme**

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:

AO1: 7 marks AO2: 6 marks AO3: 6 marks AO4: 3 marks AO5: 3 marks

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

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

<p>Band 1 <b>Largely irrelevant/largely misunderstood/largely inaccurate</b> <b>1-5 marks</b></p> <p><b>‘Largely irrelevant’</b> work is shown when students write in an unclear way with only occasional reference to what is required by the question.</p> <p><b>‘Largely misunderstood’</b> and <b>‘largely inaccurate’</b> work is shown when knowledge of the text is insecure, hazy and often wrong.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• some vague points in relation to the task and some ideas about task and text(s)</li> <li>• the writing is likely to be unclear and incorrect; if it is accurate the content will be irrelevant</li> <li>• little sense of the AOs in relation to the task; little sense of how meanings are shaped; little sense of any relevant contexts; little sense of any connection arising out of generic study; little sense of an argument in relation to the task</li> </ul>	<p>This band is characterised by work which is <b>largely irrelevant</b> and <b>largely misunderstood</b> and <b>largely inaccurate</b>, and so unlikely to be addressing the AOs in a relevant way.</p> <p>At the top of the band students will mention some unconnected points in relation to the task during the course of their writing. The writing is likely to lack clarity.</p> <p>At the bottom of the band there will be no connection with the task; the writing will be hard to follow and <b>irrelevant</b>.</p>
<p><b>0 marks</b></p>	<p>No marks for response when nothing is written or where response has no connection to the text(s) or task.</p>	

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## Section A

**Question 01*****Othello* – William Shakespeare**

Explore the significance of the 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 and Othello
- the dramatic setting
- 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.

**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

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

**With respect to significance of dramatic method:**

Focus might be on:

- Othello’s first heroic appearance in the play and his entering with Iago in the middle of a conversation
- Othello’s control and restraint shown through his actions and measured language
- contrast of Iago’s language and Othello’s language – Othello’s first simple utterance: ‘Tis better as it is’ revealing his superiority to Iago
- the use of Iago’s expletive: ‘By Janus’ to reveal much about Iago’s double dealing
- emotive and inflammatory language used by Iago as he tries to break Othello’s calm, ‘prated’, ‘scurvy’, ‘provoking’, ‘raised father’, 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.

**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:**

Focus might be on:

- the darkness and night-time setting
- the street in Venice
- the relevance of Venice as a place of stability and honour in contrast with Cyprus
- the significance of Cyprus to the tragedy; how Cyprus was seen in the 17th century as the outpost of civilisation, the mirroring of trouble in Cyprus with the domestic trouble of Othello's marriage and the unhappy father, etc.

**AO4 Explore connections across literary texts.**

**With respect to significance of connections with the tragic genre:**

Focus might be on:

- Othello's tragic stature, his control and restraint, his pride, his being established as tragic hero
- Iago's tragic villainy, his duplicity (exemplified by his oath 'By Janus')
- Othello's love for Desdemona which could be seen as his tragic weakness, Desdemona's being an unwitting agent in the tragedy, etc.

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

**With respect to the interpretative significances that can be found:**

Students might develop any of the points mentioned above and suggest what meanings arise from those ideas and how audiences might react, for example:

- the impressiveness of Iago's plotting or the disgust felt over his deviousness
- how Othello might be seen as admirable or arrogant
- how Iago can be seen as a social inadequate and condemned or perhaps pitied, etc.

**Accept any valid discussion of dramatic method, any valid interpretation and any valid discussion of contexts of production and reception which are grounded in the passage and which relate to the play as a whole.**

**Question 02*****King Lear* – William Shakespeare**

Explore the significance of the 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 relationship between Lear and Kent
- Shakespeare's use of dialogue
- the dramatic setting
- 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.

**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

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

**With respect to significance of dramatic method:**

Focus might be on:

- Kent's first utterance, his elevated salutation, 'Hail to thee, noble master' to show his respect and loyalty to Lear (to show Lear's majesty)
- Kent's part in helping Lear come to realise that Regan and Cornwall have shown him a lack of respect in stocking his messenger
- the use of emotive language in Kent's long speech reflecting his outrage at the treatment of Lear by Regan and Cornwall ('reeking post', 'Stew'd in his haste', 'poisoned', 'coward cries')
- the matter-of-factness of Kent's listing of the events that led to his being stocked reflects his plainness to which his honour is bound
- the Fool's cryptic final lines which foreshadow later events
- the Fool's jokes and song which heighten the tragic atmosphere, 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.

**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:**

- setting of the dark location outside the castle, setting of an ancient England
- social context - Kent's first utterance, his elevated salutation, 'Hail to thee, noble master' shows his respect and loyalty to Lear and the master/servant dynamic
- the use of stocks as punishment in the 17<sup>th</sup> century as reflected in the play
- the significance of the fool as entertainer and truth-teller - his cryptic commentary on Lear's decline, his jokes and songs
- attitudes towards women as monsters

**AO4 Explore connections across literary texts.**

**With respect to significance of connections with the tragic genre:**

- Lear's tragic stature, his loss of control and restraint, his pride and outrage, his status as tragic hero
- Lear's decline from greatness, hints of his future madness reflecting his tragic fall
- Lear's 'realisation' that Regan and Cornwall have shown him a lack of respect in stocking his messenger (his anagnorisis)
- the description of the behaviour of Regan, Cornwall and Goneril which places them as tragic villains
- Kent as tragic victim, etc.

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

**With respect to the interpretative significances that can be found:**

Students might develop any of the points mentioned above and suggest what meanings arise from those ideas and how audiences might react, for example:

- views and attitudes towards Lear as tragic figure – sympathy or condemnation might be expressed
- reactions to Kent and the Fool in terms of their loyalty, stupidity perhaps
- how some might find positives in the extract while some might focus on the pessimism, etc

**Accept any valid discussion of dramatic method, any valid interpretations and any valid discussion of contexts of production and reception which are grounded in the passage which relate to the whole play.**

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## Section B

**Question 03*****Richard II* – William Shakespeare**

Explore the view that, despite his tragic flaws, Richard is ‘ultimately magnificent’.

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

**[25 marks]**

**Some possible content** is given below. It suggests some of the ways the Assessment Objectives might be addressed. 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.

**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 as students address and ‘explore’ the given view.
- organisation of ideas
- use of appropriate concepts and terminology
- technical accuracy

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

**With respect to significance of dramatic method:**

Focus might be on:

- structural issues relating to Richard’s changes in fortune – events at the beginning and ending of the play, entrances and exits
- contrast of scenes – as administrator of a terrible judgement at the start of the play, scenes of irresponsibility with his favourites, his arrogance in speaking of Gaunt and the tender scenes with Isabella
- the use of the mirror in focusing on Richard’s tragic recognition
- Gaunt’s speech about England
- Richard’s dramatic contrast with Bolingbroke
- his speeches and soliloquies, imagery, linguistic devices, etc

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

**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 writing about Richard’s ‘tragic flaws’ and whether he is ‘ultimately magnificent’ students will specifically be engaging with moral, religious, tragic and political contexts. In discussing whether Richard is ‘ultimately’ magnificent students will be engaging with and demonstrating understanding

of the significance and influence of the contexts of when the play was written and how it has been received. Focus might be on:

- Richard kingship in the context of the Divine Right of Kings, his belief in his divine right and that he is the 'deputy elected by the Lord'
- his inept leadership and the mismanagement of his lands as documented in Gaunt's speech
- his irresponsible behaviour, pandering to the wishes of his favourites
- his disrespectful and dismissive treatment of his uncles etc

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

##### **With respect to significance of connections with the tragic genre:**

In writing about Richard's 'tragic flaws' and whether he is ultimately 'magnificent' students will specifically be engaging with the tragic concept of tragic weakness, hubris, hamartia and tragic grandeur. Focus might be on:

- Richard as tragic hero
- Richard's recklessness, his arrogance, his lack of political vision
- his pride and belief in his own untouchability
- his growing stature and moral journey as he commands the stage
- his stateliness in his renunciation of the crown, his defiance of Bolingbroke, etc

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

##### **With respect to the interpretative significances that can be found:**

Some students will agree with the proposition set up in the task and focus on:

- Richard's tragic stature in the last two acts of the play
- Richard's associating himself with England itself
- the comparison between Richard and Bolingbroke in the deposition scene
- Richard's command of the stage after he returns from Ireland
- the comparison between Richard and his assassins
- the poetry that Richard speaks, etc

Some will disagree and focus on:

- Richard's weakness at the start of the play
- his extravagance and eccentricity
- Richard's posturing
- his treatment of his uncles
- his behaviour with his favourites
- his self-dramatisation in the later scenes of the play
- his self-pity at the end of the play, etc

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

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**Question 04*****Death of a Salesman* – Arthur Miller**

Explore the view that Willy's tragic isolation is caused largely by Linda's failure to understand him.

Remember to include in your answer relevant comment on Miller's dramatic methods. **[25 marks]**

**Some possible content** is given below. It suggests some of the ways the Assessment Objectives might be addressed. Some ideas will inevitably 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.

**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 as students address and 'explore' the given view.
- organisation of ideas
- use of appropriate concepts and terminology
- technical accuracy

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

**With respect to significance of dramatic method:**

Focus might be on:

- the way that Miller structures the play, juxtaposing scenes with Linda and Willy and scenes with Willy and others
- the setting of 1950s America
- contrast of scenes
- use of the flashbacks with The Woman
- dialogue imagery, language related to buying, selling, success and failure, the use of the Requiem, etc

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

**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 play:**

In writing about Willy's 'tragic isolation' and whether it is largely caused by 'Linda's failure to understand him', students will specifically be engaging with domestic, economic, tragic, gender and psychological contexts. In discussing whether Willy's tragic isolation is 'largely' caused by Linda's failure to understand him, students will be engaging with and demonstrating understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts of when the play was written and how it has been received.

Focus might be on:

- the setting of Willy’s house with ‘towering, angular shapes behind it, surrounding it on all sides’ – perhaps suggesting his isolation and entrapment
- Willy as victim of a consumerist world
- Willy as victim of his American world and its ideology as represented in the play
- Willy’s economic situation and the significance of Ben, Charlie and Bernard
- his growing psychological instability – suggested specifically by the flashbacks
- his being isolated and destroyed by the gulf between the false reality that he constructs for himself and the reality of the world he has to live in

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

##### **With respect to significance of connections with the tragic genre:**

In writing about Willy’s ‘tragic isolation’ and his whether this is largely caused by Linda’s failure to understand him, students will specifically be engaging with the tragic concepts of loneliness, domestic breakdown, sadness and death. They might also connect with the concept of pity. Focus might be on:

- the tensions between Willy and Linda in terms of the domestic tragedy
- the tensions between Willy and Biff heightening the breakdown of relationships typical of the tragic genre
- Willy’s inability to understand himself and his situation, his myopia
- his growing unhappiness resulting in his suicide
- Linda’s and Biff’s suffering as a result of Willy’s actions and deceptions
- his being a tragic figure who is loved, despite his weakness and shortcomings, etc

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

##### **With respect to meanings and interpretations:**

Some students will agree with the proposition set up in the task and focus on:

- the way that Linda fails to see Willy’s growing despair
- the way that Linda fails to see Willy’s guilt and failure
- the world beyond the home which so affects Willy, which Linda cannot begin to understand
- the way that Linda’s attempts to remedy Willy’s anxiety only exacerbate it
- the way that Linda fails to understand Willy’s problems with Biff, etc.

Some will disagree and focus on:

- the possibility that Linda is presented as understanding her husband but is incapable of helping him
- Willy’s isolation being caused by the world in which he lives
- his isolation being caused by the cut and thrust of capitalism
- his isolation being caused by his own behaviour – his infidelity for example
- his isolation being caused by his troubled relationships with his sons
- his isolation being caused by his work and his own feelings of failure, etc.

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

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**Question 05****A Streetcar Named Desire – Tennessee Williams**

Explore the significance of Williams' presentation of Blanche's former home (Belle Reve) to the tragedy of the play.

[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 many strands listed could easily address more than one AO.

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

**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

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

**With respect to significance of dramatic method:**

- the significance of the references to Belle Reve and where they occur structurally in the play, where the past world is evoked through dialogue and description
- the way Belle Reve acts as a setting that is never seen but can be imagined through the use of description
- the name of the plantation as fantasy – just a beautiful dream
- the contrast of Belle Reve with the Kowalski's flat
- the grammatical mistake in its title which shows that Belle Reve was flawed and its passing is not to be mourned
- the use of language to describe the past

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

**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:**

- Belle Reve as a setting of a different world and a different set of stories that are gradually revealed in this play
- the representation of a romanticised and chivalrous past
- how Belle Reve represents a set of past family values different from those seen in the world Blanche now occupies

- how Belle Reve represents the glorified world of the South
- how Belle Reve is used as a contrast to the multicultural vibrant world of New Orleans as represented in the play, etc

**AO4 Explore connections across literary texts.**

**With respect to significance of connections with the tragic genre:**

- the dream world that Belle Reve represents which leads Blanche to make comparisons with her current despair and unhappiness
- how Blanche mourns the passing of an old way of life represented by Belle Reve, which in a way signifies her own passing
- the idea that Belle Reve is part of Blanche's imagination and therefore linking with the tragic concept of her blindness
- the way that the mentioning of Belle Reve leads to the conflict between Blanche and Stanley, a catalyst for her tragic end, etc

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

**With respect to the interpretative significances that can be found:**

Students might develop any of the points mentioned above and suggest what meanings arise from those ideas and how audiences might react, for example:

- how audiences might view the past nostalgically
- how Belle Reve is part of the folklore of the play
- how Belle Reve is associated with beauty and gallantry
- Belle Reve as custodian of honour which is now lost
- the way that Belle Reve is seen as something that had been worth fighting for, and dying for
- how the world of Belle Reve was a world of privilege that has passed
- how Blanche's male ancestors mishandled their privilege and wealth and 'exchanged the land for their epic fornications'
- how the house and land of Blanche's and Stella's childhood had already been crippled by mismanagement
- how the new world of the Kowalskis and New Orleans is more vibrant and speaks against any mourning of the demise of Belle Reve
- how the new world looks forward in a positive way
- how Stanley's loyalty to his friends, and especially Mitch, is something that was absent in Belle Reve, etc.

**Accept any valid discussion of dramatic method, any valid interpretations and any valid discussion of contexts of production and reception which are grounded in the passage which relate to the whole play.**

