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AS

**ENGLISH LITERATURE B**

**7716/2B**

Paper 2B: Literary Genres: Aspects of Comedy

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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 Comedy Paper 2: 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. Candidates 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 candidates 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 candidates 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 pages 5 and 6) 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 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:
- has the candidate engaged in a relevant debate or constructed a relevant argument about their poetry text?
  - has the candidate referred to different parts of the text to support their views?
  - has the candidate referred to more than one poem if using the anthology?
  - has the candidate referred to the writer's/writers' authorial method?
  - the candidate's AO1 competence.

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**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 about their prose text?
  - has the candidate referred to different parts of the novel to support their views?
  - has the candidate referred to the writer's authorial 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 midway through 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
<p>Band 5 <b>Perceptive/Assured</b> <b>21-25 marks</b></p> <p>'Perception' is demonstrated when students are showing the depth of their understanding and responding sensitively to the texts and task.</p> <p>'Assuredness' is shown when students write with confidence and conviction.</p>	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>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>At the bottom of the band there will be coherence and accuracy with some <b>perception</b> but with less consistency and evenness.</p>
	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>	
<p>Band 4 <b>Coherent/ Thorough</b> <b>16-20 marks</b></p> <p>'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.</p> <p>'Thoroughness' is shown when students write carefully, precisely and accurately.</p>	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>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>At the bottom of the band ideas will be discussed in a shaped, relevant and purposeful way with a clear sense of direction, with one or two lapses in <b>coherence</b> and accuracy.</p>
	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>	

## Section A: Poetry

### Question 01

#### *The Nun's Priest's Tale* – Geoffrey Chaucer

Explore the view that the comedy in *The Nun's Priest's Tale* arises largely from having animals and birds behave like human beings.

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

**[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 *The Nun's Priest's Tale* through the lens of **comedy**, 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 'to what extent' they agree with 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 authorial method:**

Focus might be on:

- the extract – Pertelote's elevated tone and use of rhetoric ('Lo Catoun', 'Now, sire,' 'For Goddes love' 'I wol nat lye') the contrasting ideas (Cato's philosophy and the comic deflation of 'laxatyf') which heighten the humour, the comic absurdity of Pertelote's detailing the benefits of taking laxatives, the use of invocation to God, use of personal pronouns to show affection, the way that some of the rhymes are meant to heighten significance or for the purpose of deflation, for example of 'dremes'/ 'bemes' and 'laxatyf'/ 'lyf', etc
- the use of the poetic narrative form – the tale within a longer narrative frame
- structural issues relating to when and where Chaucer writes about animals behaving like human beings
- the use of the Nun's Priest as narrator and storyteller, telling the story in the context of the pilgrimage to Canterbury
- use of hyperbole – Chauntecleer looking 'as it were a grym leoun'
- the use of allegory, irony, dialogue, patterning, dramatic action, descriptive detail, figurative language
- contrast of settings (specifically the farmyard setting in which Chauntecleer lords it over his harem of hens and the setting of the road to Canterbury), etc

Given that this is an **Open Book** exam, comment on the ways meanings are shaped needs to be specific and accurate.

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

**With respect to contextual issues arising from the question and the poem:**

In exploring the view that, in *The Nun's Priest's Tale*, the 'comedy' arises largely from 'having animals and birds behave like human beings', students will specifically be engaging with social, gender, literary and comedic contexts. In exploring whether the comedy 'arises largely from' animals behaving like humans, students will be engaging with and demonstrating understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts of when the poem was written and how it has been received.

Focus might be on:

- the use of the beast fable and other literary allusions ('The Book of Lancelot of the Lake'), the quoting of Cato by Pertelote heightening the ridiculousness of humans quoting seeming authority
- the link with Medieval art and bestiaries (referred to by Chauntecleer) and the use of animals to show human behaviour
- the debate that frames the tale with the Host who wants no more tragedies and is happy with the tale that the Nun's Priest tells
- the use made of the courtly love tradition and its representation in literature
- the manic chase of the farmyard animals in which Chaucer alludes to the 1381 Peasants' Revolt (their behaviour is compared to 'Jakke Straw and his meynee') and mocks the lower classes and their disordered and rebellious behaviour
- the representations of gender and sexual politics with Pertelote and Chauntecleer, etc

**AO4 Explore connections across literary texts.**

**With respect to connections with the wider comedic genre:**

In exploring whether the 'comedy' in the *The Nun's Priest's Tale* arises largely from 'having animals and birds behave like human beings', students will be connecting with the comedic concepts of the ridiculousness of human behaviour, comic deflation, stock comic characters and allegory.

Focus might be on:

- the way that writers in the comedic tradition create alternative worlds – here a barnyard; the Nun's Priest who invites us to enter a make-believe world when 'Beestes and brides koude speke and synge'
- the ridiculous behaviour of human beings posturing, screaming, arguing
- the comic deflation of the hero (here Chauntecleer) though without coming to harm
- the use of stock comic characters – the fox, like Malvolio
- the outmanoeuvring of the comic villain by the comic hero
- the use of allegory to explore sexual dynamics (another aspect of the comedic genre) – as in *The Taming of the Shrew* where animals are also used to comment on human behaviour,
- comic resolution – order restored for the widow and for the animals, 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 pride, recklessness, negligence, susceptibility to flattery as displayed by the animals and birds
- the behaviour of the married couple, Chauntecleer and Pertelote
- Pertelote as the caring but superior wife telling her husband what to do
- Pertelote's simple resolution that Chauntecleer should take some laxatives
- the behaviour of Chauntecleer – his showing off in front of his wives, especially Pertelote, by airing his intellect, etc

Some will disagree and focus on:

- Chaucer's satire throughout the Prologue and Tale
- the fact that a preacher is telling this tale which is bawdy and funny
- the language being more comic than the 'behaviour' of the animals, e.g. Pertelote's prescription of a 'digestive' for her husband
- the behaviour and language of the human characters in the tale – the 'povre wydwe' and 'hir doghtren two', especially when the fox runs off with the cock
- the voice of the Nun's Priest that tells the story
- the humour of the animals behaving like animals – the description of the 'love making' for example, 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.**

**Question 02****Poetry Anthology: Comedy**

Explore the view that competition and rivalry created between characters in comedic poetry is always light-hearted. You must refer to the poem 'Not my Best Side' and **at least one** other poem.

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

**[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 The Poetry Anthology: Comedy through the lens of **comedy**, 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 'to what extent' they agree with 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 authorial method:**

Focus might be on:

- the extract – the use of the dragon as speaker, his use of questions to heighten the absurdity, the comic stabs at Uccello's painting (A horse with a deformed neck and square hoofs, the lack of blood), the use of speech making rhetorical devices ('Why, I said to myself', 'And why', 'I don't mind dying ...but'), use of descriptive detail, 'ostentatiously beardless' 'deformed neck', language associated with the myth, 'conqueror', 'ritually', 'rise again', etc
- the variety of poetic forms, dramatic monologue form of 'Not my Best Side', ballad form of 'Tam o' Shanter'
- structural issues relating to the competition and rivalry between characters, three different voices in 'Not My Best Side'
- descriptive details and uses of language from the extract - the humour of the victim's being 'so unattractive as to be inedible'; the use of exaggeration, the fact that the dragon is given a voice, a mythological creature speaking, the comedy of the dragon's description of the knight, his measured contempt
- elsewhere in 'Not my Best Side' – the unconscious humour of the knight revealing his arrogance and competitive nature
- the use of different voices to reveal competition and rivalry in other poems

- in all poems - the use of allegory, irony, dialogue, patterning, dramatic action, parody, descriptive detail, variations in register, use of colloquial English, etc

Given that this is an **Open Book** exam, comment on the ways meanings are shaped needs to be specific and accurate.

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

**With respect to contextual issues arising from the question and the poems:**

In exploring the view that, 'Competition and rivalry created between characters' in comedic poetry is always 'light-hearted', students will specifically be engaging with social, gender, literary and comedic contexts. In exploring whether rivalry is 'always' light-hearted, students will be engaging with and demonstrating understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts of when the poem was written and how it has been received.

Focus might be on:

- use of myth and tradition (and the bestial narrative) in 'Not My Best Side' which Fanthorpe overturns and develops
- context of art – Uccello's painting
- rivalry seen in the girl's story revealing her superficiality, perhaps reflecting a 1970's stereotype
- gender issues in 'The Flea' – dominant male voice suggesting the speaker's power in that he has control of the story
- social class – educated privileged class in 'The Flea', lower social class in 'Tam o' Shanter'
- use of settings which have comic potential – remote Scottish setting and the wild night of 'Tam o' Shanter', mythologised setting of 'Not My Best Side' etc

**AO4 Explore connections across literary texts.**

**With respect to connections with the wider comedic genre:**

In exploring whether 'competition and rivalry' created 'between characters' in comedic poetry is always 'light-hearted', students will be connecting with the comedic aspects of competition and rivalry and light-hearted approaches to the subjects that comedic writer have chosen.

Focus might be on:

- competition and rivalry as a comedic aspect, in the tradition of *The Taming of the Shrew*, (in 'Not My Best Side' between the dragon and the knight, in 'My Rival's House' between the speaker and her mother-in-law)
- light-heartedness as an aspect of comedic literature – for example the light and airy tone of 'Tam o' Shanter, the clever and mock serious tone of 'The Flea', the use of satire in 'A Satirical Elegy...'
- the dark undertone of comedic literature reflected in 'Sunny Prestatyn', etc

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**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 rivalry of the speaker in 'My Rival's House', the mocking of the mother-in-law, etc
- perhaps the rivalry of the satirist in 'A Satirical Elegy...'
- perhaps the witches in 'Tam o' Shanter' and the comedy of their chase, etc
- the comic rivalry between the speaker in 'The Flea' and his mistress in how to use the flea to further their arguments etc

Some will disagree and focus on:

- the rivalry in 'Not my Best Side' being sad in terms of the dragon, the way it might make some readers angry about stereotypes and the ways that human beings are shaped by their culture
- perhaps some sense of serious competition in 'Sunny Prestatyn' by advertisers vying for space on billboards; the final triumph of *Fight Cancer* providing a dark rather than comic edge
- perhaps the rivalry in 'The Flea' being viewed as the attempt by the male to dominate the female
- the rivalry in 'My Rival's House' providing an ongoing and unsolvable dark shadow on the marriage, 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.**

**Question 03**

Explore the view that Betjeman writes comic verse and not serious verse.

You must refer to 'In Westminster Abbey' and **at least two** other poems.

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

**[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 the Betjeman Selection through the lens of **comedy**, 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 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 authorial method:**

Focus might be on:

- the extract and its being the last two stanzas of the poem, the use of climax, use of bathos, use of satire, use of middle-class female voice, use of religious language, use of the prayer and address to God, simple rhymes and effect of final couplet, etc
- use of different forms of verse in other poems – quatrains in 'Hunter Trials' and 'A Subaltern's Love Song', use of six line stanzas in 'Christmas', single verse paragraph for 'Diary of a Church Mouse', etc
- the use of different voices to reveal comic and serious tones – the mouse in 'Diary of a Church Mouse', the woman in 'In Westminster Abbey', the third-person narrator who might be Betjeman in 'Christmas', etc
- in all poems - the use of irony, dialogue, patterning, satire, colloquialisms, formal language, simple rhymes, bathos, specific settings, use of local detail, natural imagery, specific names, etc

Given that this is an **Open Book** exam, comment on the ways meanings are shaped needs to be specific and accurate.

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

**With respect to contextual issues arising from the question and the poems:**

In exploring the view that Betjeman writes ‘comic verse’ and not ‘serious verse’ students will specifically be engaging with social, literary, gender, religious and comedic contexts. In exploring whether Betjeman writes comic and ‘not’ serious verse, students will be engaging with and demonstrating understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts of when the poems were written and how they been received.

Focus might be on:

- the range of comic material – the church, conventional religion, women, men, ‘modern’ society, love, etc
- the way the poems represent and comment on 20<sup>th</sup> century attitudes, the establishment and 20<sup>th</sup> century cultural values
- the range of potentially serious issues, industry and nature, personal faith, etc

**AO4 Explore connections across literary texts.****With respect to connections with the wider comic genre:**

In exploring the view that Betjeman writes ‘comic verse’ and not ‘serious verse’, students will specifically be connecting with the comedic aspects of satire, the absurdity of human beings in love, the ridiculousness of human behaviour and the irreverence towards the dead.

Focus might be on:

- the use of satire in ‘In Westminster Abbey’ to ridicule the higher classes and the establishment, in a similar way to Swift
- the disrespect for the dead in ‘Upper Lambourne’ (not unlike Austen’s treatment of the death of Mrs Churchill)
- the comedy underpinning romantic relationships in ‘The Licorice Fields at Pontefract’
- his laughing at men smitten by love in ‘The Licorice Fields at Pontefract (as in *Twelfth Night*)’
- the idea that comedy should teach and correct the worst aspects of human behaviour – be didactic as in Austen and in Chaucer – as in ‘Slough’, ‘The Village Inn’, 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:

- Betjeman’s comic treatment of places, Slough, Pontefract, Sheffield
- his treatment of human behaviour – of obsessions (‘Hunter Trials’), people in love (‘A Subaltern’s Love Song’)
- his ridiculing of upper-class pursuits and pastimes (in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century) – tennis in ‘A Subaltern’s Love Song’, the gymkhana in ‘Hunter Trials’,
- his comic debunking of the superficiality of the upper classes in ‘In Westminster Abbey’, of the modern world in ‘A Village Inn’, ‘Advertising Pays’, etc

Some will disagree and focus on:

- how Betjeman perhaps seems to be light-hearted but the light-heartedness masks a serious condemnation of society
- the serious stabs at the hypocrisy of church goers in ‘Diary of a Church Mouse’, the attack on the authorities in ‘The Arrest of Oscar Wilde at the Cadogan Hotel’

- the attack on ‘modern’ society and the ruining of tradition in ‘The Village Inn’
- Betjeman’s exploration of his own religious faith in ‘Christmas’ and ‘Diary of a Church Mouse’
- his respect and perhaps reverence for Ireland and Emily in ‘Ireland with Emily’ etc.

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

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## Section B: Prose

**Question 04*****Emma* – Jane Austen**

Explore the view that, in *Emma*, the comedy is most apparent in those moments of self-discovery experienced by Emma Woodhouse herself.

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.

**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 ‘to what extent’ they agree with 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 authorial method:**

Focus might be on:

- structural issues relating to when and where Emma has moments of self-discovery
- the use of the omniscient voice interspersed with the focalisation of Emma to highlight the comedy of Emma’s moments of self-discovery
- the use of irony, dialogue, patterning
- use of formal language and wit, etc

Given that this is an **Open Book** exam, comment on the ways meanings are shaped needs to be specific and accurate.

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

**With respect to contextual issues arising from the question and the novel:**

In exploring the view that in *Emma* the ‘comedy’ is most apparent in those moments of ‘self-discovery’ experienced by Emma Woodhouse herself, students will specifically be engaging with, social, gender and comedic contexts. In exploring whether the comedy is ‘most apparent’ in the moments of Emma’s ‘self-discovery’, students will be engaging with and demonstrating understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts of when the novel was written and how it has been received.

Focus might be on:

- Emma as representation of an intelligent women in a static society with so little to do that she organises the lives of others and inevitably makes mistakes
- Emma's class and social position giving her the power and influence to blindly pursue mistaken ideas from which the moments of self-discovery follow
- the moments of the self-discovery which are comically drawn
- the whole novel as a comedy of manners
- the representation in the novel of the Augustan high-class world, which might be comic to a 21st century reader
- the use of setting – Highbury as a very small world, Hartfield an even smaller world, over which Emma presides, etc

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

**With respect to connections with the wider comedic genre:**

In exploring whether in *Emma*, the 'comedy' is most apparent in those moments of 'self-discovery experienced by Emma Woodhouse herself', students will be connecting with the comedic concepts of humour and education and learning.

Focus might be on:

- Self-discovery as a comedic aspect
- the comedy of Emma's moments of self-discovery (a clear aspect of the comedy genre) which are a surprise to Emma, but not the reader
- the use of comic deflation which is typical of the comic genre, Emma is set up to fall but with no disastrous consequences
- the comedic aspect of learning through realisation (as she discovers her true feelings for Mr Knightley, for example), 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:

- Emma's self-discovery when she thinks that her actively bringing two people together is wrong
- Emma's blindness regarding Mr Elton's attentions to Harriet which culminate in her shock when he protests himself to her
- Emma's belief that Frank Churchill is interested in her which ends in her surprise when she learns that he is engaged to Jane Fairfax
- Emma's horror when she learns that she has inadvertently encouraged Harriet to set her sights on marriage to Mr Knightley
- Emma's realisation that she loves Mr Knightley – Mr Knightley must marry 'no-one but herself'
- her realisation that she should not try to arrange marriages for other people which is always tempered with a decision to continue, etc

Some will disagree and focus on:

- moments of self-discovery by Emma which are not comic, for example her shame at her cruelty to Miss Bates
- comedy being more apparent in the scenes with Miss Bates
- the comedy of Austen's irony and tone of writing
- comedy being more apparent in the scenes with Mr Woodhouse, Mr John Knightley, etc

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

**Question 05*****Small Island* – Andrea Levy**

Explore the view that Queenie’s narrative voice always amuses the reader.

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.

**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 ‘to what extent’ they agree with 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 authorial method:**

Focus might be on:

- structural issues relating to when Queenie’s story is told and how it is interspersed and contrasts with the other three stories
- Queenie’s self-deprecating tone
- Queenie’s use of colloquialisms
- the retrospective narrative and its significance in relation to the way Queenie’s voice amuses the reader
- the recreation of the child’s voice to suggest naivety at the start of the novel
- the use of irony, dialogue, patterning, use of minor sentences, use of dialogue, use of anecdote, use of self-mockery, use of inventive similes, etc

Given that this is an **Open Book** exam, comment on the ways meanings are shaped needs to be specific and accurate.

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

**With respect to contextual issues arising from the question and the novel:**

In exploring the view that in *Small Island* Queenie’s ‘narrative voice’ always ‘amuses’ the reader,

students will specifically be engaging with, social, gender, narrative and comedic contexts. In exploring whether Queenie's narrative voice 'always' amuses the reader, students will be engaging with and demonstrating understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts of when the novel was written and how it has been received.

Focus might be on:

- Levy's choice and creation of four different narrative voices for her story
- Levy's giving a voice to a white working-class woman in a post war context to show the growing power of women and to show their positions in a world which is changing in terms of power structures
- the significance of the 1948 setting and Queenie's ability to challenge the conventions of her world
- the way that her narrative shows an unpleasant side of Britain the 1940s – the inherent racism, the attitudes of the American GIs, male attitudes towards women
- Levy's choosing to write a historical novel, writing from the 21<sup>st</sup> century and looking back with amusement at a world which has passed, etc

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

**With respect to connections with the wider comedic genre:**

In exploring whether in *Small Island*, 'Queenie's narrative voice always 'amuses' the reader, students will be connecting with the comedic concepts of humour and possibly the inclusion of dark events.

Focus might be on:

- the selection of an array of comic incident to amuse
- Queenie connecting with the comedic aspect of perspective and self-deprecation
- the way that Queenie delights in recording detail of battles with males, leading to wider awareness of battles between the sexes
- the inclusion of dark and unpleasant events (the death of Albert, for example) which are not allowed to dominate the comedic text, 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 naivety of her younger self which Queenie creates in the opening section of the novel
- Queenie's directness in recreating situations and feelings
- Queenie's ability to laugh at herself
- her honesty
- her powers of observation
- her ability to record the ridiculousness of behaviours of all around her – even in the final chapter when she records the sadness of giving up her baby, etc

Some will disagree and focus on:

- the inappropriateness of the word 'always'
- the way that perhaps there is humour in parts but not throughout the novel

- the way that Queenie’s apparent humour masks some uncomfortable personal feelings, eg her sadness at Michael’s leaving, her disappointment in her marriage to Bernard, her grief at giving up her baby
- the way that her stories tell of some horrible acts of racism that are not funny
- the way that her narrative shows the cruelty of the American GIs, etc.

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

**Question 6****Wise Children – Angela Carter**

Explore the view that, far from being figures of ridicule, old people are celebrated in *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. Some ideas will inevitably 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.

**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 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 authorial method:**

Focus might be on:

- the way that readers’ views on old people are shaped by Dora’s lively first person septuagenarian narrative voice, her ‘live’ voice– she wants to praise old people
- structural issues relating to when and where old people are most clearly in focus given the often retrospective nature of the narrative, focus might be specifically on the final chapter, the 5 chapters like the five acts of a play
- the use of other voices, Perry, Nora, Melchior, Lady A
- the use of irony, vulgarisms, flashbacks, use of specific descriptive detail, use of riddles, delays, use of time, use of five chapters – acts of drama, use of time – this is just one day but goes backwards, intertextuality, echoes of Shakespeare’s dramatic comedy and tragedy, the drawing attention to its own artifice, etc

Given that this is an **Open Book** exam, comment on the ways meanings are shaped needs to be specific and accurate.

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

**With respect to contextual issues arising from the question and the novel:**

In exploring the view that far from being figures of ridicule, old people in *Wise Children* are celebrated, students will specifically be engaging with, social, gender, literary and comedic contexts. In exploring ‘whether’ old people are celebrated rather than ridiculed, students will be

engaging with and demonstrating understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts of when the novel was written and how it has been received.

Focus might be on:

- the theatrical and literary contexts that give the novel coherence as it crosses the whole of the 20<sup>th</sup> century
- the portrayal of men and women as they reach old age
- the representation of various theatrical/ dance/ television worlds at different historical periods in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries,
- the parodying of Hollywood in the 1930s, etc

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

**With respect to connections with the wider comedic genre:**

In exploring the view that far from being figures of ‘ridicule’, ‘old people’ in *Wise Children* are celebrated, students will be connecting with the comedic aspect of old people as targets of comedy.

Focus might be on:

- Carter’s subversion of the expected, her upturning the associations of the pantaloons and the last age of all described in Jacques seven ages of man speech
- Carter’s elevating those in their twilight years (unlike Mr Woodhouse in *Emma* who is a ‘type’) and allowing them to confidently dance and sing and celebrate life to the very end
- Carter’s using a 75 year old narrator who is not maudlin like the Ancient Mariner or broken like Leo in *The Go Between* and allowing her to tell as lively a tale as ever there was (some sense of parody here), a narrator who defies convention and uses vulgarisms, explicit sexual details in ways that might be associated with youthful narrators, Bridget Jones for example
- Carter’s using an array of characters aged over 75 as central: they are sexual and energetic– overturning the comic convention in which central characters are young
- Carter’s using her old people to bring about the comic resolution (in some ways like Paulina in *The Winter’s Tale*) but going further and allowing Dora and Nora to become mothers and ‘fathers’ to Gareth’s twin babies, 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 defiance of Dora and Nora to ‘act their age’
- their belief that life continues to the end, to feel the joy of song and dance
- Dora’s ability to tell a story with such an acute memory and attention to detail
- the geniality of Perry and his ability to perform tricks at the age of 100
- the foresight and confidence of ‘grandma’
- Ranulph Hazard who himself refused to be restricted by age
- the happiness of Dora and Nora as they take away their babies at the end believing they will be good parents and live to be 100
- Melchior living to 100 and emulating his father, etc

Some will disagree and focus on:

- Dora and Nora as batty old women, dressed up in furs and paint looking ridiculous and behaving absurdly
- their drunkenness and sexual antics at 75 which could be seen as ridiculous
- the comic portrayal of Wheelchair
- Grandma's walking about in the nude,
- Melchior's refusal to accept responsibility, etc.

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

