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A-level  
**ENGLISH LITERATURE B**  
**(7717/1A)**

Paper 1A: Literary Genres: Aspects of Tragedy

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Mark scheme

Specimen Material

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Version/Stage: Version 3.1

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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)

## Information for Examiners marking Aspects of Tragedy: Closed Book

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

### The significance of Closed Book

Examiners must understand that in marking a Closed Book exam there are examining implications. 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, apart from the printed extracts, 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 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 are no right answers. 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 reward only 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	perceptive/assured
Band 4	coherent/thorough
Band 3	straightforward/relevant
Band 2	simple/generalised
Band 1	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 seen the significance of the extract in relation to the overall tragedy?
  - has the candidate quoted from the extract to support ideas?
  - 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?
  - 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.

**Section C**

14. Examiners need to bear in mind the following key points when marking questions connecting two texts:
- has the candidate focused on the aspect of tragedy set up in the question and referred to two texts?
  - has the candidate engaged in a relevant debate or constructed a relevant argument around the two texts?
  - has the candidate considered the writers' authorial methods in the two texts?
  - has the candidate adhered to the rubric – one drama text and one other, with one of the texts being pre-1900?
  - has the candidate given substantial coverage of two texts?
  - the candidate's AO1 competence.

**Annotation**

15. Examiners should remember that annotation is directed solely to senior examiners.
16. In addition to giving a mark, examiners should write a brief summative comment indicating how the mark has been arrived at. These comments are likely to mirror the appropriate mark band descriptors but comments must not be mechanical. Examiners need to describe candidate performance.
17. Please remember that scripts can go back to candidates, so although your audience is a senior examiner, you must express your views temperately.
18. 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.

19. Use the Model Marked Script for guidance.

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### The Assessment Objectives and their significance

20. 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%)

### Rubric Infringements

The rubric of this paper could be infringed in the following ways:

- candidates might not write on a drama text in Section C
- candidates might use the same text in Section C that they have used in Section A
- candidates might use another Section A text in Section C
- candidates might not write about a pre-1900 text in Section C
- candidates might answer on only one text in Section C.

If there has been an infringement, the whole answer needs to be read and judged on its quality. A mark should then be given based on the best relevant part of the response. The mark given will not be beyond Band 3.

### Mark Scheme

It is important to remember that these students, in the main, are 18 years old so we are judging their skills at the end of 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>‘<b>Perception</b>’ is demonstrated when students are showing the depth of their understanding and responding sensitively to the texts and task.</p> <p>‘<b>Assuredness</b>’ 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>‘<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.</p> <p>‘<b>Thoroughness</b>’ 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>Band 3 <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>Band 2 <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**

Read the extract below and then answer the question.

Explore the significance of this extract in relation to the tragedy of the play as a whole. Remember to include in your answer relevant analysis of Shakespeare's dramatic methods.

**[25 marks]**

**Some possible content** is given below. It suggests some of the ways the Assessment Objectives might be addressed, but as 'significance' relates to contextual, structural, linguistic and interpretative issues, some strands listed could easily address more than one AO. In their answer students should refer to the significance that can be seen in the extract and how some of this significance may pertain to the tragedy of the play as a whole.

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 appearance in the play as a structural point
- the entrance of Iago and Othello and, later, the entrance of Cassio, with Officers; the exit of Othello
- the dialogue (and use of shared lines) between Othello and Iago which increases dramatic tension and dramatic contrast, eg, 'Iago: Those are the raised father and his friends/ You were best go in. Othello: Not I: I must be found.'
- use of emotive language, imagery of war, verse, Othello's extravagant language, 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:

- setting of the street in Venice, the night-time setting
- social context – Cassio’s respectful address to Othello, Iago’s relationship with Othello
- 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
- the significance of the war to the tragedy, how the play is about soldiers who ultimately do not have a war to fight
- the treatment of women – how Othello speaks of Desdemona and how her father seeks Othello’s arrest because of her elopement
- Othello’s race and colour from both 17th century and 21st century perspectives, 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 openness, his being established as tragic hero
- Iago’s tragic villainy
- 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 because of 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 interpretations and any valid discussion of contexts of production and reception which are grounded in the passage.**

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

Read the extract below and then answer the question.

Explore the significance of this extract in relation to the tragedy of the play as a whole. Remember to include in your answer relevant analysis of Shakespeare’s dramatic methods.

**[25 marks]**

**Some possible content** is given below. It suggests some of the ways the Assessment Objectives might be addressed, but as ‘significance’ relates to contextual, structural, linguistic and interpretative issues, some strands listed could easily address more than one AO. In their answer students should refer to the significance that can be seen in the extract and how some of this significance may pertain to the tragedy of the play as a whole.

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:

- visual effect of Kent in the stocks, Lear and the Fool’s reaction to the visual sight of Kent in the stocks perhaps signifying Lear’s entrapment
- structural point about how Lear’s seeing Kent in the stocks has been anticipated from when Cornwall and Regan delivered the punishment – or, more accurately, the insult to Lear
- the Fool’s comic insults reflect the foolishness of Kent’s earlier behaviour when he got himself stocked
- the use of stichomythia showing Kent’s determination to tell the truth in comparison to Lear’s denial
- 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

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:

- 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
- the use of stocks as punishment in the 17th 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
- attitudes about the importance of being a host in the 17th century
- the significance of ‘kindness’ in the 17th century and its connection with family relationships
- the treatment of old people from both 17th century and 21st century perspectives

**AO4 Explore connections across literary texts.**

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

Focus might be on:

- 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 disrespected him in stocking his messenger (his anagnorisis)
- Lear’s anger – his fatal flaw perhaps
- the description of the behaviour of Regan, Cornwall and Goneril which places them as tragic villains
- Kent as tragic victim, his endorsing the play’s pessimism perhaps, 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 interpretations and any valid discussion of contexts of production and reception which are grounded in the passage.**

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## Section B

**Question 03*****Othello* – William Shakespeare**

‘Othello’s virtue and valour ultimately make him admirable.’

To what extent do you agree with this view?

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

**[25 marks]**

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

Focus might be on:

- structural issues relating to Othello’s changes in fortune – events at the beginning and ending of the play, entrances and exits
- how Othello’s valour pre-dates events in the play and what the play deals with is his fall from grace
- his final speech which is self-dramatising and not admirable
- his action of murdering Desdemona on stage which is not admirable
- use of soliloquy, imagery, linguistic devices, etc

Given that this is a **closed book** exam, comments 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 the play:**

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In writing about 'valour' and 'virtue', students will specifically be engaging with contexts of war, soldiership, morality and justice. In discussing whether Othello is ultimately admirable, 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:

- Othello's nobility as a war hero at the start of the play and how attitudes to valour and virtue might have changed over time
- Othello's courage in war as outlined in the back stories of his exploits (his valour) and attitudes to this
- the view of valour endorsed by Desdemona in her account of his story
- his virtue in his taking his own life in the way he took the heathen Turk by the throat and smote him, link to judicial and religious contexts
- his lack of virtue in eloping with Desdemona and not asking Brabantio for her hand in marriage (comment here might be on expectations of marriage from a 17th century perspective)
- his cruel treatment of Desdemona which is hardly virtuous – especially from a 21st century perspective, etc

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

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

In writing about Othello's 'virtue', students will be connecting with the tragic concept of morality and the initial or potential worthiness of the tragic hero; in writing about 'valour' there will be links with the greatness of the tragic hero. Focus might be on:

- the concepts of virtue and valour in relation to the tragic hero and Othello's tragic grandeur
- Othello's renown in war and position as General which connect him to classical tragic heroes of high estate and high esteem
- Othello's sense of justice where he takes his own life, connecting him with the tragic concepts of death, loss and waste
- the way that Othello celebrates his own virtue and valour, linking him to the tragic concept of pride
- the way that Othello sees himself as the hand of justice (extensions of his virtue and valour), linking him with the tragic concept of hubris, 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:

- how Othello might be admired by audiences and/or characters (Cassio, the Duke) in the play – perhaps even himself
- the dependence of the state on his leadership, the way the senate and Duke shape audiences' views
- Othello's virtue in overcoming adversity
- the virtue of his love for Desdemona

Some will disagree and focus on:

- how he might not be admired by audiences and/or characters in the play (Iago, Brabantio) – perhaps even himself
- his arrogance and pride
- his foolishness which overshadows his virtue and valour
- his despicable behaviour – eavesdropping, plotting to kill Cassio, rudeness to Emilia, disrespect to Lodovico

Students will need to address both valour and virtue in their answers. Some might argue that Othello has valour but little virtue or that one quality or the other makes him admirable or that the absence of one quality militates against audiences admiring him.

**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*****Othello* – William Shakespeare**

‘*Othello* is more about the absurdity of jealousy than its destructive power.’

To what extent do you agree with this view?

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

**[25 marks]**

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

Focus might be on:

- structural issues relating to those in the grip of jealousy and how it dominates the action – beginning with Iago’s jealousy of Othello and Cassio, and then accelerating with the jealousy of Emilia, Bianca and Othello, culminating in Desdemona’s murder – the outcome of Othello’s jealousy
- the use of the stage prop, the handkerchief as ‘ocular proof’ to inflame jealousy
- Othello’s absurd actions and speech which result from jealousy – his eavesdropping, skulking behind screens, speaking in an uncontrolled way, using bestial language, praying for vengeance to the dark forces in a parody of the conventional marriage ceremony
- use of soliloquy, imagery, the green eyed monster, different voices to comment on jealousy, etc.

Given that this is a **closed book** exam, comments 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 the play:**

In writing about ‘jealousy’, ‘absurdity’ and ‘destructive power’ in *Othello*, students will specifically be engaging with moral, psychological and gender contexts. In discussing whether the play is ‘more’ about the absurdity of jealousy than its destructive power, 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 way that Othello is changed morally because of jealousy from being a noble lover and defender of peace to a cruel murderer
- the significance of the colour green with sickness in the 17th century and its being emblematic of jealousy
- Othello’s fear of being mocked, perhaps reflecting 17th century attitudes of the cuckolded man being discredited
- the link between jealousy and cuckoldry (the horned madness) in the play, perhaps suggesting that Renaissance men were prone to suspect their wives
- the metaphorical horns being seen as absurd by 21st century audiences
- modern psychoanalytical ideas about sociopaths and psychopaths incorporating Iago’s jealousy of Othello and Desdemona’s love – a love he does not have, his jealousy of Cassio’s ‘daily beauty’ which fuels his desire to see Cassio dead
- how attitudes towards jealousy have changed over time, etc

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

In writing about ‘jealousy’, ‘absurdity’ and ‘destructive power’, students will be connecting with the tragic concepts of the flaws in the tragic hero, the motivation of the tragic villain, links between comedy and tragedy and the breakdown of society and order. Students might focus on:

- the absurdly jealous behaviour of Othello, perhaps his hamartia, which leads to the fall of the tragic hero
- the absurdity of jealousy in terms of tragic drama – possibly the way it provides a dark, grotesque comedy exemplified by the foolish jealousy of Roderigo which connects him to conventions of dramatic comedy and comic relief in tragedy
- the play’s tragic outcomes (caused by the destructive power of jealousy) – the deaths and suffering of Desdemona, Emilia and Othello, 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 the absurd displays of Othello’s jealousy dominate Acts 3, 4 and 5 of the play

- the ridiculousness of Othello's denial that he is jealous
- the way Iago is able to play on Othello's jealousy, to easily manipulate him and to make him into a puppet
- the way the handkerchief is used to show Othello, Emilia and Bianca behaving absurdly because of sexual jealousy, etc

Some will disagree and focus on:

- Othello's treatment of Desdemona when gripped by jealousy, his hatred of Cassio and desire to kill him
- Othello's violent desire to take Desdemona's life – chop her into messes
- his murder of Desdemona by stopping her breathe
- Iago's professional jealousy of Cassio and how this ignites his jealous plot, etc

Some will say that the two ideas set up in the question are interrelated and that the absurdity of jealous behaviour heightens the tragic experience, 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 05****King Lear – William Shakespeare**

‘Edgar’s buoyancy of spirit makes him ultimately a comforting force in the tragedy.’

To what extent do you agree with this view?

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

**[25 marks]**

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

Focus might be on:

- structural issues relating to Edgar’s buoyancy of spirit – his being duped by Edmund but not despairing, his survival instinct as he escapes on to the heath, his attempt as poor Tom to help Lear, his cheerfulness with his father, his attempt to right Edmund’s wrongs in the duel, his having the final words of the tragedy
- the use of Edgar’s disguise, exits and entrances
- the use of his language, prose and snatches of riddle and song as poor Tom
- use of soliloquy, imagery, etc.

Given that this is a **closed book** exam, comments 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 the play:**

In writing about ‘buoyancy of spirit’ ‘ultimately’ and ‘comforting force’ of Edgar’s role in *King Lear*, students will specifically be engaging with dramatic and religious contexts. In discussing whether

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Edgar is ‘ultimately’ a comforting force, 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:

- Edgar as a religious force in a pagan play
- Edgar as ‘a Christian gentleman’, one who turns the other cheek
- Edgar’s conquering of evil in the duel with Edmund and the links with the Morality Play
- ideas in folklore and fairy tale about the good son/bad son
- Edgar’s upholding of the Commandment ‘Honour thy father’, 17th century notions of the expected loyalty of children as evidenced in the play
- Edgar’s being the chorus of the play and a positive commentator and a philosopher
- his being a representation of madmen and unfortunates (the naked wretches) in 17th century England, etc

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

##### **With respect to connections with the wider tragic genre:**

In writing about Edgar’s potential ‘buoyancy of spirit’ ‘ultimately’ and ‘comforting force’, students will be connecting with the tragic concept of the possible emergence of positives and with tragic resolutions. Students might focus on:

- Edgar’s survival at the end of the play and his final speech
- Edgar as a tragic victim
- Edgar on the heath with Lear and Gloucester as exemplifying the tragic concept of suffering
- Edgar’s role in highlighting the tragic significance of journeys, recognition and catharsis – in terms of himself, Lear and Gloucester, 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 support that Edgar gives his blind father in a physical sense
- the way that Edgar wants to save his father’s soul and lead him from despair
- Edgar’s reflecting the goodness of Cordelia
- the comfort that Lear finds in Edgar’s presence as mad Tom on the heath, etc
- Edgar’s faith in the triumph of goodness over evil and his ability to see beyond mere luck to some higher grand design, etc

Some will disagree and focus on:

- Edgar’s foolishness and naivety at the start of the play
- the treatment of Edgar as a madman being a terrible indictment of Lear’s world

- his mistake in not revealing his identity to Gloucester
- his being the catalyst for Lear's insanity on the heath
- the harshness and coldness of some of his views, eg those on Gloucester's adultery, the 'dark place' where Edmund was begot which cost Gloucester his eyes
- Edgar's being a cold moraliser, etc

Students will need to consider 'ultimately'. Some will question Edgar's 'buoyancy of spirit' perhaps and focus on his moments of despair and the final speech.

**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 06****King Lear – William Shakespeare**

‘Cordelia’s death is the shocking climax of cruelty in Shakespeare’s exploration of evil.’

To what extent do you agree with this view?

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

**[25 marks]**

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

Focus might be on:

- the structure of the play in relation to Cordelia’s death, reference to climax, following the deaths of Goneril and Regan
- the use of irony – Albany’s ‘The gods defend her’ followed by ‘Enter Lear with Cordelia dead in his arms’
- the terrible visual image of the father carrying his dead daughter
- use of language – Lear’s howling, religious imagery, Edgar’s moralising, 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 the play:**

In writing about ‘Cordelia’s death’, ‘the shocking climax of cruelty’ and ‘Shakespeare’s exploration of evil’ in *King Lear*, students will specifically be engaging with dramatic, moral and religious contexts. In discussing whether Cordelia’s death is ‘shocking’, students will be engaging with and

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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 rewriting of the ending of the play by Tate in the late 17th century because the original was so shocking, an ending which held sway until the 19th century
- the way that her death raises the moral question: is there any justice in the world?
- the possibility that her death is a representation of the death of Christ and implicitly there is a suggestion of an afterlife
- Cordelia, as representation of the appalling treatment of women (either sanctified or murdered) by society
- from a 21st century humanist perspective, perhaps, her death is really just part of life's cycle
- from a rationalist perspective, perhaps, human life is of no greater consequence than the life of a dog, horse, rat and is therefore not shocking
- Cordelia's death not as a catastrophic and mystical event in the Bradleyan sense but the simple result of an act of human greed and ambition, etc

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

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

In writing about Cordelia's 'death', the shocking climax of cruelty' and Shakespeare's exploration of 'evil', students will be connecting with the tragic concepts of death dominating the ending of tragedies and the pervading force of evil and cruelty. Students might focus on:

- Cordelia's death as one of many as befits the tragic genre
- Cordelia's death as the result of overwhelming evil – Edmund's decision to assume power and overturn the proposed mercy intended by Albany
- the idea that Cordelia's death is not shocking as it is a requirement of tragedy
- Lear's suffering as a result of Cordelia's death – again an aspect of tragedy
- Cordelia's death as an example of how the innocent are victims in tragic writing, 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 unnecessary and perhaps gratuitous nature of Cordelia's death which makes it 'shocking'
- the tragic spectacle of the father carrying his dead child
- the seeming non-existence of any divine force of good, given the lack of intervention
- the agony for Lear (and the audience) after the beauty of the reconciliation scene



- the idea that the death of Cordelia makes the play unbearably pessimistic and difficult to watch
- the fact that the captain who murdered Cordelia on Edmund's command did it for advancement and money, etc.

Some will disagree and focus on:

- the emblematic value of Cordelia's life and work
- the idea that although she dies and lies alongside the evil characters, she is mourned
- the way her death allows for Lear's redemption and the rise of his tragic stature – he kills the slave that hangs her and he feels the depth of emotion for another
- the reconciliation scene as the true climax of the play which is not overshadowed by Cordelia's death, 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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## Section C

### Question 07

‘Tragedies leave readers and audiences with a final sense of emptiness and disillusion.’

To what extent do you agree with this view in relation to **two** texts you have studied?

Remember to include in your answer relevant comment on the ways the writers have shaped meanings.

[25 marks]

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

Examiners must also remember that because students have read and studied the two texts through the lens of **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 ‘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 dramatic/authorial method:**

Focus might be on:

- the structure of the drama text in relation to the task
- the use of dialogue, language, dramatic action, exits and entrances, soliloquies, flashbacks, in the drama text
- the possible use of a poetry text or a novel and how methods there shape meaning
- the writers’ uses of structural, linguistic and other devices to shape meanings, etc.

Given that this is a **closed book** exam, comments 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 the texts:**

In writing about ‘audiences and readers,’ being left with ‘a final sense of emptiness and disillusion’ in their two texts, students will specifically be engaging with dramatic, moral, religious and philosophical contexts. In discussing ideas about the meaning of existence and possibly nihilism,

students will be engaging with and demonstrating understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which the texts were written and how they have been received. Focus might be on:

- the failure of the American Dream in *Death of a Salesman* and *The Great Gatsby*, the emptiness at the heart of the 1920s world represented in the novel, the negative take on consumerism, etc
- the sense of despair for England in *Richard II*, 16th century ideas about the divine right of kings and how the play suggests that Bolingbroke will never wear the crown easily
- Cuchulain as representative of Ireland and a troubled nation
- the sense that Tess is being toyed with by the gods

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

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

In writing about ‘audiences and readers’ being left with a ‘final sense of emptiness and disillusion’ in their two texts, students will be connecting with the resolutions of tragedies in which writers establish bleak moods. Students will also deal with the reactions of endings on audiences and on the cathartic experience of tragedy, the purification and purgation of the emotions. Students might focus on:

- the bleakness at the end of *Death of a Salesman*, the waste and loss at the end of *Richard II*, the emptiness and pointlessness at the end of *Tess of the D’Urbervilles*, the misery of the knight in ‘La Belle Dame’
- the lessons that audiences can learn from experiencing *Death of a Salesman*, ‘Miss Gee’, ‘Death in Leamington’, the fact that *The Monk’s Tale* is didactic with a purpose to prevent men from believing in prosperity,
- the way that positives can be seen to emerge in tragedies, the potential happiness of Angel Clare and Liza-Lu, the lessons learned by Biff and Happy, the learning of Nick to value what Gatsby stood for and to readjust his moral values, 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:

- Willy Loman’s failed dreams, his pretence, his inability to be honest with his family, the pressure he puts on Biff, his death, the loss felt by Linda, the way Willy represents everyman in a timeless way in the striving of the individual against society and consumerism, etc
- Tess’s death at the point when she achieves happiness, the cruelty of fate, the destruction of Tess’s youthful promise and vitality, Tess’s vulnerability in the face of her family, men and social systems, the sadness of Angel Clare at the end, etc

- Richard's tragic grandeur in the deposition scene and the loss felt for his potential, the ignominious way in which he is murdered, Henry's soiled achievement and loss of dignity, the colourlessness of the world after Richard's death, etc
- the knight's hopelessness and suggested death, Isabella's sadness, grief and mourning, the treasuring of a plant instead of her lover, the cruelty of the world, the loss of love in 'Lamia' and the death of Lycius, the hollow victory of truth and cold philosophy, the displacement of Madeline and Porphyro's story which all happened 'long ago', etc
- the loss of the promises of life represented by Gatsby, the reflections of Nick and his sense of tragedy, the idea that the world is inhabited by selfishness and destruction – Tom and Daisy, the failure of Gatsby's dream, the way that Gatsby's dreams represent all humankind's dreams, etc
- the sadness of Tithonus, his lost youth and promise, Jessie's noble defiance ending in death, the loss of life represented by the boy in 'Out, out –', the sadness in 'The Death of Cuchulain' and the end of Cuchulain's power and courage, the sense of loss of more glorious pasts, the muted sadness for Miss Gee and the old lady in 'Death in Leamington', the disillusionment felt about the uncaring worlds in which they exist, etc.

Some will disagree and focus on:

- Willy's growth in understanding, the love felt by Linda, etc
- the beauty of Tess, her nobility and her facing death with dignity and composure at a point of happiness, Hardy's defence of Tess' purity, etc
- the magnificence of Richard and his eclipsing of Bolingbroke at the end of the with his language and command of the stage, etc
- the beauty of Isabella's love for Lorenzo which endures, the engulfing love of Lamia and Lycius which is more memorable than the misery created by Apollonius at the end of the poem, the fulfilment of the love between Porphyro and Madeline as they ride away together to potential happiness, etc
- readings which glamorise and celebrate Gatsby's hopes and achievements, etc
- the magnificence of Satan in *Paradise Lost* and the impressiveness of his defiance, the matter-of-factness of the Chaucer extracts which does not create a sense of disillusion because the story is humorously contextualised in *The Canterbury Tales* (the tragic focus of *The Monk's Tale* being an answer to the Host who calls for a story to show there is no ill-feeling at his jesting), the displacement of sympathy in 'Out, out –' and the focus on continuation which counters the waste of life, the focus on man's arrogance and the power of nature in 'The Convergence of the Twain' which counters disillusionment, perhaps the humorous tones of 'Miss Gee' and 'Death in Leamington', 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 08**

‘At the heart of the tragic experience is an overwhelming sense of shame.’

To what extent do you agree with this view in relation to **two** texts you have studied?

Remember to include in your answer relevant comment on the ways the writers have shaped meanings.

**[25 marks]**

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

Examiners must also remember that because students have read and studied the two texts through the lens of **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 ‘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 dramatic/authorial method:**

Focus might be on:

- the structure of the drama text in relation to the task, where structurally the shame is set up and explored and how it shapes what follows
- the use of dialogue, language, dramatic action, exits and entrances, soliloquies, flashbacks, in the drama text to foreground the shame or shamelessness
- the possible use of a poetry text or a novel and how the form is used to shape meaning in relation to shame
- the writers’ uses of structural, linguistic and other devices to shape meanings, etc.

Given that this is a **closed book** exam, comments 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 the texts:**

In writing about ‘the heart of the tragic experience,’ and ‘overwhelming sense of shame’ in their two texts, students will specifically be engaging with dramatic, moral, religious, social, psychological and philosophical contexts. In discussing ideas about how writers create and how

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readers respond to the tragic hero or heroine's shame, students will be engaging with and demonstrating understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts of when texts were written and how they have been received. Focus might be on:

- the shame of failure experienced by Willy as representative of the individual at the hands of an uncaring consumerist society
- Richard's shame that he has failed to keep his crown, that he has dishonoured his country, John of Gaunt's shame on behalf of England that it has lost its glory
- the sense that Tess's shame is induced by 19th century holier-than-thou attitudes and by an unfeeling church which Hardy insists are at odds with the natural world
- the shame felt by Cuchulain after he realises he has killed his son (the inversion of the Oedipal myth)
- the shamelessness of behaviour in the represented world of 1920s America which sees itself as being beyond reproach, where there are no moral standards against which individuals judge their own actions, etc

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

##### **With respect to connections with the wider tragic genre:**

In writing about 'the heart of the tragic experience,' and 'overwhelming sense of shame' in their two texts, students will be connecting with the tragic element of the tragic hero or heroine's sense of dishonour, their judgements of themselves against social or religious norms. Students will also connect with the wider tragic issues of how shame connects to the loss of pride or hubris.

Focus might be on:

- the change in Richard that occurs on his return from Ireland when he begins to lose his pride and when he experiences shame at his behaviour and his situation
- the contrast between the pride Willy articulates and his shame at not being able to face his family
- Tess's loss of pride when she returns home pregnant and ashamed
- Lycius' shame when he is with Lamia and when he passes Apollonius (who seems like his moral conscience), his shame when Apollonius appears at his wedding, Madeline's shame at the loss of her virginity, 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:

- Willy's shame at being a failure, the shame that leads to his dishonesty, his shame at Biff's discovery of his affair, his shame in front of Charley, his humiliation in front of his sons at the restaurant, etc
- Richard's shame at the loss of his crown and country, his speech to Aumerle about telling sad stories of the death of kings, his feeling of debasing himself in front of Northumberland

and later Bolingbroke, his shame in the mirror scene ('a brittle glory shineth in this face;/As brittle as the glory is the face'), perhaps Bolingbroke's shame at Richard's deposition and death, etc

- Tess's shame at her family's irresponsibility and carelessness and her fear of judgement, Tess's after the birth of Sorrow because of society's standards, her shame in carrying the burden of her past when she is with Angel, the shame after she returns to Alec, etc
- the shame of the knight in 'La Belle Dame' to have been beguiled by the faery child, his loss of his knightly prowess, etc
- the shame Gatsby feels when he is about to meet Daisy again after five years because he feels unworthy, perhaps Nick's shame at having become embroiled in the world of carelessness and corruption – his reason for going back West and his breaking off with Tom, Daisy and Jordan, etc
- the shame of Tithonus at being lured by the promise of eternal life, his shame at his foolishness, Jessie's shame at being pursued by a suitor for whom she feels nothing, the muted shame perhaps of the narrator in 'Out, out –', the shame lying beneath Satan's rhetoric, Miss Gee's shame at her sexuality and fantasies, etc.

Some will disagree and focus on:

- shame being present but not overwhelming
- Willy's shame being half felt, the absence of shame in Happy and Biff perhaps, etc
- the shamelessness of Richard at the beginning of the play, his cavalier way of taking his uncle's land, his extravagant behaviour, the ambiguity surrounding Bolingbroke's shame, etc
- the lack of shame in Alec and Angel – and Tess's family, of its only being touched upon, etc
- the purity of Isabella's love for Lorenzo and her honest love for which she feels no shame, the innocence of Lycius and his being a victim and therefore without shame, the despair rather than shame of the knight, Porphyro's bravado and shamelessness, etc
- Gatsby's belief in his own righteousness, his not feeling any shame for his criminal behaviour and pursuit of another man's wife, etc
- the defiance rather than shame of Satan in *Paradise Lost*, his acting with impunity, the lack of depth in the characterisation of Lucifer and Adam in *The Monk's Tale* so there is little focus on shame, the detachment of voice in 'The Convergence of the Twain' and the general focus on man's arrogance rather than his shame, the focus on magical powers in 'The Death of Cuchulain', which suggests that man is not responsible for his actions perhaps, the absence of shame of the Nurse in 'Death in Leamington' who is oblivious to the death of her charge, the absence of any shame of the doctors in 'Miss Gee' which is the point of the tragedy, etc.

**Accept any valid interpretations and 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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