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A-level  
**ENGLISH LITERATURE B**  
**(7717/2A)**

Paper 2A: Texts and Genres: Elements of Crime Writing

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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 Elements of Crime Writing: Open Book

Welcome to this mark scheme which is designed to help you deliver fair and accurate assessment. Please read carefully all sections 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 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 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	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 unseen passage?
  - has the candidate written about elements of crime writing?
  - has the candidate written about authorial method?
  - 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 the writer's authorial 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 element of crime writing set up in the question and referred to two texts?
  - has the candidate engaged with significance in relation to task and the two texts?
  - has the candidate considered the writers' authorial methods in the two texts?
  - has the candidate given substantial coverage of two texts?
  - the candidate's AO1 competence
  - has the candidate satisfied the rubric over Sections B and C – one poetry text, one post-2000 novel and a third text, with one of the texts being pre-1900?

**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.

### **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 poetry text in either Section B or Section C
- candidates might use the same text in Section C that they have used in Section B
- candidates might not use a pre-1900 text in either Section B or Section C
- candidates might only answer on one text in Section C.

If there has been an infringement, then both Sections B and C need to be read and judged on their quality. Marks should then be given based on the candidate's best answer. The writing on the illegitimate text cannot be credited. If the best answer is in Section C and there is an infringement, 0 marks will be given for Section B. If the best answer is Section B, only the writing on the legitimate text will be credited in Section C. 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
<b>Band 5</b> <b>Perceptive/Assured</b> <b>21-25 marks</b>  ‘Perception’ is demonstrated when students are showing the depth of their understanding and responding sensitively to the texts and task.  ‘Assuredness’ is shown when students write with confidence and conviction.	AO1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>perceptive, assured and sophisticated argument in relation to the task</li> <li>assured use of literary critical concepts and terminology; mature and impressive expression</li> </ul>	This band is characterised by <b>perceptive</b> and <b>assured</b> work which shows confidence, sharpness of mind and sophistication in relation to the task.  At the top of the band students are consistently <b>assured</b> and will demonstrate sensitivity and <b>perception</b> across all five assessment objectives in the course of their response.  At the bottom of the band there will be coherence and accuracy with some <b>perception</b> but with less consistency and evenness.
	AO2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>perceptive understanding of authorial methods in relation to the task</li> <li>assured engagement with how meanings are shaped by the methods used</li> </ul>	
	AO3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>perceptive understanding of the significance of relevant contexts in relation to the task</li> <li>assuredness in the connection between those contexts and the genre studied</li> </ul>	
	AO4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>perceptive exploration of connections across literary texts arising out of generic study</li> </ul>	
	AO5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>perceptive and confident engagement with the debate set up in the task</li> </ul>	
<b>Band 4</b> <b>Coherent/ Thorough</b> <b>16-20 marks</b>  ‘Coherence’ is shown when students are logical and consistent in their arguments in relation to the task. They hold their ideas together in an intelligible way.  ‘Thoroughness’ is shown when students write carefully, precisely and accurately.	AO1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>logical, thorough and coherent argument in relation to the task where ideas are debated in depth</li> <li>appropriate use of literary critical concepts and terminology; precise and accurate expression</li> </ul>	This band is characterised by <b>coherent</b> and <b>thorough</b> work where ideas are linked together in a focused and purposeful way in relation to the task.  At the top of the band students will demonstrate a fully <b>coherent</b> and <b>thorough</b> argument across all five assessment objectives in the course of their response.  At the bottom of the band ideas will be discussed in a shaped, relevant and purposeful way with a clear sense of direction, with one or two lapses in <b>coherence</b> and accuracy.
	AO2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>thorough understanding of authorial methods in relation to the task</li> <li>thorough engagement with how meanings are shaped by the methods used</li> </ul>	
	AO3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>thorough understanding of the significance of relevant contexts in relation to the task</li> <li>coherence in the connection between those contexts and the genre studied</li> </ul>	
	AO4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>logical and consistent exploration of connections across literary texts arising out of generic study</li> </ul>	
	AO5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>thorough engagement with the debate set up in the task</li> </ul>	

<p>Band 3 <b>Straightforward/ Relevant</b> 11-15 marks</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> 6-10 marks</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

### Question 01

Explore the significance of the crime elements in this extract. Remember to include in your answer relevant detailed analysis of the ways that Hill has shaped meanings.

This extract is taken from the early part of Susan Hill's novel, *A Question of Identity* (published in 2012). The witnesses have just given their evidence in a murder trial. The accused, Alan Keyes, has pleaded not guilty. Two crime reporters, Charlie Vogt and Rod Hawkins, are awaiting the verdict with every expectation of a conviction.

**[25 marks]**

**Some possible content** is given below. It suggests some of the ways the Assessment Objectives might be addressed, but as 'significance' relates to contextual, structural, linguistic and interpretative issues many strands listed could easily address more than one AO. For that reason, markers should not equate the number of suggestions below with the weighting of the AO, which is clearly shown above.

Examiners must also remember that because students will be writing about the extract through the lens of **crime writing**, 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 narrative method:** (comments on method need to be embedded into the argument about the significance of crime elements). Focus might be on:

- direct uncluttered style
- use of imagery: 'like greyhounds in the slips'
- use of Charlie as the centre of consciousness
- Charlie addressing himself
- postmodern novel drawing attention to the creation of fiction (better than any film, better than any book)
- use of voices
- creation of tension
- use of minor sentences
- use of descriptive detail
- use of legalistic language and phrasing – 'innocent until proved guilty'
- use of irony
- references to real criminals – Hindley and Brady
- staccato sentences,
- use of questions and answers
- narrative surprise perhaps of the not guilty verdicts, etc

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

**With respect to significance of contexts:**

Focus might be on:

- setting of courtroom
- courtroom drama situation
- gender issues, the male murderer, the female victims
- social context in relation to the impact of murder
- psychological context in that murder is horrible and its impact goes on beyond the point of murder
- sense that in a trial in 2002 men and women have equal status (jury almost equal share of women, female barrister, etc) and that trials are different from former times (Charlie recalls the jury his father had served on being largely middle-aged and largely male), etc

**AO4 Explore connections across literary texts.**

**With respect to significance of connections with the crime writing genre as seen in other reading:**

Focus might be on:

- set in a court room, awaiting a judgement on a murder trial
- use of crime reporters to act as observers and commentators
- suspense at awaiting jury's decision
- description of the jury returning to announce their verdict, recreation of imagined fear of one of the jurywomen, sense of the kind of people who comprise the jury
- sense of the theatricality of the trial, 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 readers might react, for example:

- sense that because the verdict of not guilty appears at the start of the novel it will have consequences
- sense that the crime reporters' expectation and shock will lead to further investigations
- sense perhaps of the unpredictability of juries
- sympathy for the relatives who will have to endure further trials
- sense of how this verdict will impact on Alan Keyes for whom no sympathy is created in this passage, etc

**Accept any valid discussion of interpretations, narrative method and any valid discussion of contexts of production and reception which are grounded in the passage.**

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## Section B

**Question 02****Selected poems – George Crabbe, Robert Browning and Oscar Wilde**

‘The main focus of interest in the poems of Crabbe, Browning and Wilde is the psychology of the criminal.’

To what extent do you agree with this view? Remember to include in your answer relevant detailed exploration of the poets’ authorial methods.

You should refer to ‘Peter Grimes’ and at least **one** other poem.

**[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 work of the three poets through the lens of **crime writing**, 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 (organisational decisions, beginnings and endings, uses of climaxes, use of rhyme, rhythm etc, relating to where the poets offer insights into the psychology of the criminal)
- use of narrative verse paragraphs in ‘Peter Grimes’, the dramatic monologue form in Browning, ballad form in Wilde
- use of voices, narrative viewpoint, language, linguistic devices, patterning, etc

Given that this is an **open book** exam, comment on the ways meanings are shaped should 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 writing about whether the ‘psychology of the criminal’ is the main focus of ‘interest’, students will specifically be engaging with narrative, moral, social, psychological and gender contexts. In discussing whether readers find the issue of the psychology of the human mind the ‘main focus of interest’, 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 have been received.

Focus might be on:

- the use of settings as backdrops for the crimes
- how readers become psychologists in reading between the lines perhaps
- how Crabbe stresses the effect of Peter’s strict religious upbringing upon his psychology
- how the criminals’ psychology is influenced by a sense of morality/religious/social judgement
- Browning’s 19th century interest in sensation and eccentric states of mind
- Wilde’s sympathetic examination of punishment and the horrors of prison life and capital punishment in the 19th century
- Crabbe’s essentially moralistic and didactic 18th century reaction to the criminal and immoral mind set
- the moral tale in Crabbe and its clear trajectory with focus on fate and Peter’s crimes being punished, etc

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

**With respect to connections with the wider crime writing genre as seen in other reading:**

In writing about the ‘psychology’ of the ‘criminal’ mind, students will be connecting with the crime elements of the criminal, their motivation, their transgressional behaviour and attitudes and their reactions to their crimes and punishment. Focus might be on:

- what the criminals’ words reveal of their states of mind
- what the narrators reveal of the psychology of their subjects
- what the poets reveal of the criminals’ justification for their actions, attitudes, desires, motives
- how the criminals think about their punishments, 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 dramatic monologue gives direct access to the minds of the speakers to the exclusion of anything or anyone else (the lover; the Duke; the young woman seeking poison) thereby being the main focus of interest
- how readers are interested in what motivates Peter
- the interest readers might have in Peter’s deathbed fears, his terror of punishment, visions of Hell

- the interest that readers might have in Wilde’s empathetic imaginings of what the doomed trooper must have felt as he looked ‘so wistfully’ at the sky and what Wilde reveals of his own ‘criminal’ mind, etc

Some will disagree and focus on other potential areas of main interest:

- the actions of the criminals – their murders or murderous intents in Browning, Peter’s cruelty and murder of the boys, the murder of the trooper’s wife
- the victims – Porphyria and the Duchess, the unnamed trooper’s wife (the narrative gap here), the boys that are Peter’s victims
- the moral dimension
- Crabbe’s and Wilde’s creation of external worlds (Crabbe – the fishing community, Wilde – Reading gaol)
- Crabbe’s focus on the father-son relationship
- Wilde’s focus on the terror and wrongness of capital punishment
- the irresponsible treatment of employees by employers and children by adults in ‘Peter Grimes’
- the effect upon the innocent and society in general of breaking moral and social laws, 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*****The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* – Samuel Taylor Coleridge**

To what extent do you agree with the view that the Mariner deserves his punishment for the crimes he commits? Remember to include in your answer relevant detailed exploration of Coleridge'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 *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* through the lens of **crime writing**, 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 (organisational decisions, the narrative frame, beginnings and endings, the seven parts to the narrative, uses of climaxes, use of rhyme, rhythm etc, relating to where Coleridge focuses on the Mariner's punishment and crimes)
- use of voices, the embedded story, the Mariner as teller of his own crime and punishment, language of crime and punishment, linguistic devices, patterning (albatross/cross), religious imagery, etc

Given that this is an **open book** exam, comment on the ways meanings are shaped should 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 writing about whether the Mariner 'deserves the punishment' for the 'crimes he commits', students will specifically be engaging with moral, social, religious and psychological contexts. In discussing whether readers think he 'deserves' his punishment, students will be engaging with and demonstrating understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts of when the poem

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was written and how it has been received.

Focus might be on:

- the use of settings as backdrops for the Mariner's crimes and his punishment
- the Mariner's pushing the boundaries of exploration and perhaps playing God
- the way that the albatross could represent Christ/Christianity
- religious belief in the late 18th century, the belief in a moral universe
- art having a moral function in late 18<sup>th</sup> century thinking
- the horrible psychological torment that the Mariner endures, etc

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

**With respect to connections with the wider crime writing genre:**

In writing about whether the Mariner 'deserves' the 'punishment' for the 'crimes he commits', students will be connecting with the crime writing elements of crime and punishment. Focus might be on:

- the crime of killing the albatross and its religious and ecological significance
- the possible crime of pushing the boundaries of knowledge
- the crime of breaking up the community spirit
- the crime of taking life – thou shalt not kill
- the torturous physical and psychological punishment which is never-ending, the presence of the supernatural to increase torment
- punishment which seemingly does not allow forgiveness, 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 symbolic nature of the shooting in that it could represent the murder of Christ, so therefore the Mariner does deserve his punishment
- the Mariner's destruction of the life principle
- the allegory of the Cain story
- Man's destruction of the natural world from an eco-critical viewpoint
- the Mariner's crime which signifies man's arrogance which needs punishing
- the way the punishment makes him a better man, etc

Some will disagree and focus on:

- the excessiveness of the punishment for shooting a single bird
- the way that the Mariner's random shooting of the bird simply reflects the randomness of the universe (as represented in the poem) and is not a heinous crime
- the way that the Mariner's punishment also leads to the unfair punishment of others by his association with them (the crew members, the Wedding Guest)



- the way the agony of the Mariner’s punishment does not cease, reflecting a cruel, unloving father, perhaps, 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 04*****When Will There Be Good News?* – Kate Atkinson**

'In *When Will There Be Good News?* coincidence is more important in the solving of crimes than the detectives.'

To what extent do you agree with this view? Remember to include in your answer relevant detailed exploration of Atkinson'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 *When Will There Be Good News?* through the lens of **crime writing**, 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 (organisational decisions, beginning and ending, uses of climaxes, relating to where Atkinson focuses on the solving of crimes), inclusion of multiple interconnected stories, which are finally related to one another through the return to the event at the opening of the novel (cyclical structure), postmodern open-ended structure where the lives of the characters apparently continue after the punishment of the criminals
- use of voices – essentially third person but use of many focalisers, use of free indirect speech, language of crime and punishment, use of title, use of dialogue, linguistic devices, language often colloquial but use is made of literary references and allusions, nursery rhymes
- settings – Edinburgh, open countryside, railways, rooms
- use of humour, both in coincidences and in the novel's tone, etc

Given that this is an **open book** exam, comment on the ways meanings are shaped should 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 writing about whether ‘coincidence’ is more important in ‘solving crimes’ than the ‘detectives’, students will specifically be engaging with moral, social, legal, literary and metaphysical contexts. In discussing whether ‘coincidence’ is ‘more important’, students will be engaging with and demonstrating understanding of the significance and influence of the context of when the novel was written and how it has been received. Focus might be on:

- the use of settings – Edinburgh and Devon for example – as backdrops for the various crimes and for their detection
- the way different members of society – as represented by the characters in the world of the novel – are affected by the crimes committed and some become detectives themselves, for example Reggie
- the way that Brodie is a force of morality in wanting criminals caught
- the uses of the various coincidences which, while perhaps overplayed, demonstrate that in the world of the novel there are metaphysical forces at work which are larger than those resulting from human endeavour
- how 21st century writers and readers are influenced by cinema/TV/etc. in plotting/character-presentation and how judgements might be made in relation to the text and task etc

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

In writing about whether Atkinson’s creation of coincidence is responsible for ‘solving more crimes’ than ‘detectives’, students will be connecting with the crime writing elements of ‘crimes’ and ‘detectives’. Focus might be on:

- how Atkinson as a postmodern writer subverts the genre by showing the importance of coincidence rather than the solid, systematic and, perhaps, the stylised police work of earlier literary detectives, etc.
- the creation of Jackson Brodie as a rather unusual detective compared to others with rather unusual methods (who is finally able to provide some good news)
- the work done by DCI Louise Munroe in conjunction with Brodie
- how the crimes have a 21<sup>st</sup> century focus
- use of humour in the creation of coincidences and as Atkinson enters the consciousnesses of her characters – link with the crime writing genre which incorporates comedy
- how Atkinson as a modern writer further develops the ‘detective’ story, 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:

- Atkinson’s use of coincidence to bring central characters together
- Brodie’s boarding the train going in the wrong direction (for him)
- the crash having been caused by Reggie’s tutor
- the train crashing near Reggie Chase
- the crash bringing Brodie into the vicinity of his old flame, DCI Louise Monroe, who is currently investigating the disappearance of Reggie’s employer, Joanna Hunter, whose story opens the novel, etc.
- the relative ineffectiveness of Jackson Brodie and DCI Monroe
- perhaps the way the detectives are more interested in their own affairs than the crimes to be solved, etc.

Some will disagree and focus on:

- the significance of the opening chapter and its terrifying crime which is resolved by detective work
- the way the detectives are used to show the connections between past and present
- the methodical approach of the detectives, whose methods are essentially pedestrian police work, rather than Poirot-like ratiocination
- the way the reader has to wait for the end of the novel for the solution to the crime and, making judgements on coincidence/detection, might be premature, etc.

Some might suggest that police work is used by Atkinson in combination with ‘coincidence’ to create ‘explanations’.

**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*****Atonement* – Ian McEwan**

‘McEwan suggests Briony’s crime can easily be forgiven because she is just a child.’

To what extent do you agree with this view? Remember to include in your answer relevant detailed exploration of McEwan’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 *Atonement* through the lens of **crime writing**, 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 (organisational decisions, beginning and ending, uses of climaxes, relating to where McEwan focuses on Briony’s crime), inclusion of different timelines, which are connected and finally related to one another through McEwan’s surprise ending, that Briony’s story is only what she would like to have happened
- the postmodern ending where the novel draws attention to its own artifice
- McEwan’s choice to set his story in a historical past between the wars and to move forward in time for the conclusion
- use of the apparent third person narrator, which is in fact a trick on Briony’s part (and of course McEwan’s)
- the use of irony – at the end of the novel there is a requirement to view the events with ironic hindsight given that Briony is an unreliable narrator
- significance of the novel’s title, etc

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

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**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 writing about whether McEwan suggests that ‘Briony’s crimes’ can be ‘forgiven’ because she is just a child, students will specifically be engaging with moral, social and legal contexts. In discussing whether she can be ‘easily forgiven’, students will be engaging with and demonstrating understanding of the significance and influence of the context of when the novel was written and how it has been received. Focus might be on:

- the use of setting (time and place) – the time between the wars and Briony’s upper class country house – for the place of the crime
- social and judicial laws about when children become legally responsible, Briony is thirteen
- issues of social class and her lack of guidance from her mother and father and others in her upper class world
- Briony as an instrument of her class which is repeatedly represented as being resistant to and above the law, (for her crimes she is rewarded, in a sense, with a long life and by becoming an accomplished novelist)
- Cecilia’s struggle to forgive her sister
- Briony’s inability to forgive herself, etc

**AO4 Explore connections across literary texts.**

**With respect to connections with the wider crime writing genre:**

In writing about whether McEwan’s potential suggestion that Briony’s crimes can easily be forgiven, students will be connecting with the crime writing elements of ‘crimes’ and ‘punishment’.

Focus might be on:

- the way that this novel subverts the normal expectation of the crime novel: criminals in *Atonement* are rewarded and not punished – Briony becomes a successful and wealthy novelist and ultimately she gets what she has always wanted – a performance of *The Trials of Arabella*, in her ancestral home, surrounded by her family, etc
- Briony’s crime of falsely accusing Robbie of raping her cousin Lola at their country house estate (a familiar generic setting for crime fiction in the 1920s and 30s)
- Briony’s attempt to forgive herself by reconstructing the story and then telling it in novel form
- Briony’s punishment of guilt which leads to her refusing to go to Cambridge and by working as a nurse during the war (an effort to do some moral good)
- her guilt which leads to her seeking atonement by writing a happy love story, 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:

- McEwan’s implicit sympathy for Briony and the crime of deception she commits as a child, especially compared with the adult Paul Marshall who is the rapist and who is never punished
- the way that readers might excuse Briony’s youth and therefore forgive her
- Briony’s need for attention, her being a victim of her class and her adolescence (she struggles to understand her growing sexual awakening)
- the way the adults in the story neglect or fail to understand her needs and her hormonal changes
- her natural jealousy of her sister
- her wanting her sister for herself
- her wanting her sister to be pure
- her own creative and fertile imagination which races out of control, her playing out of her own fantasies which she does not understand
- Briony’s disappointment regarding her play which results in the sequence of events in the crime she commits, etc

Some will disagree and focus on:

- McEwan’s implicit criticism of her, perhaps – she is smug and stubborn when she is a child
- McEwan’s not getting into the territory of ‘forgiveness’
- Briony’s knowing exactly what she is doing in involving the police
- sympathy felt for Cecilia and Robbie which militates against forgiving Briony
- the efficacy of writing in a futile attempt to find atonement
- Briony’s/McEwan’s crime against the reader, which is an adult novelist playing tricks on the reader, leaving readers feeling cheated; at the end there is the realisation that Briony has been the moral arbiter of the story and just as she is an ‘unreliable witness’ she has also been an unreliable narrator, etc

Some will challenge the notion of ‘forgiveness’ and discuss it in religious terms perhaps.

**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 06*****Oliver Twist* – Charles Dickens**

‘In *Oliver Twist* Dickens presents criminals as products of their society.’

To what extent do you agree with this view? Remember to include in your answer relevant detailed exploration of Dickens’ 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 *Oliver Twist* through the lens of **crime writing**, 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 – the picaresque structure takes Oliver through encounters with different social and criminal groups
- the conventional ending in which the good are rewarded and the criminals punished
- the use of the novel as social critique
- use of the third person narrator, condemning in tone of the serious criminals
- the use of speech patterns and thieves’ cant, contrast between Sikes’ brutal language and that of other criminals, etc

Given that this is an **open book** exam, comment on the ways meanings are shaped should 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 writing about the extent to which Dickens presents ‘criminals as products of their society’, students will specifically be engaging with moral, social and legal contexts. In discussing the extent



to which Dickens presents them as products of their society, students will be engaging with and demonstrating understanding of the significance and influence of the context of when the novel was written and how it has been received.

- the use of setting – London in the 1830s where the passing of the Poor Law Act of 1834 allowed the creation of work houses, where the attitudes of authority figures equated poverty with crime
- the horrors of the world of London Dickens represents which produce the likes of Fagin, Sikes, and the Artful Dodger
- Dickens' ambivalence towards law breakers – his condemnation of them but also his sympathy
- Fagin and Sikes being outlaws but also social outcasts
- modern readers with child centred concerns are more likely to condemn Fagin and his gang for recruiting children as pickpockets and not see Fagin as a product of his society but simply as a figure who is inherently evil in his preying on children, (Fagin lures children into his gang and forcibly kidnaps Oliver)
- the justice of Fagin and Sikes's ends, etc

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

##### **With respect to connections with the wider crime writing genre:**

In writing about the extent to which Dickens presents criminals as products of their society, students will be connecting with the crime writing elements of 'criminals', their positions in society and their relationship to it. Focus might be on:

- the types of criminals presented in the novel: thieves, abductors of children, prostitutes, fraudsters, murderers who flourish in London's streets
- the law makers who set up workhouses, those who condone child labour, those who hang children for theft
- the law enforcers and the respectable classes who show no sympathy for the criminals who may be products of their society
- the way that Dickens makes his criminals detestable physically
- the dark and dangerous settings of Fagin's den, The Three Cripples and Newgate Prison which are important elements in crime writing (in contrast to the comfortable and light residences of Brownlow and Mrs Maylie), 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 privileges of the rich and powerful and the way the underclass, criminals or otherwise, are abused, ignored or punished
- sense of a social structure dividing privileged from under-privileged

- the blurring of distinctions between criminals and victims
- the way the under-privileged have to fight for survival
- the ‘criminal’ figures – Fagin, the boys, Nancy, Bill Sikes, who are often presented as a parody/grotesque replication of mainstream society: they go off to ‘work’; they come home at the end of the day to ‘the merry old Jew’ – an authoritarian and, in some ways, paternalistic figure – and share a sense of community
- the criminals who are critical of the establishment that has criminalised them: Dickens gives them a voice – the Artful Dodger’s ‘this ain’t the place for Justice’ at his trial and Mr Bumble’s ‘The law is an ass’
- the criminals who steal or, like Nancy, sell themselves, to stave off poverty and hunger and ‘stay alive’
- the deaths of the ‘criminals’ – Nancy, brutally murdered at the hands of her pimp, Sikes’s accidental death and Fagin’s legal death through hanging, etc

Some will disagree and focus on:

- the idea that though society is strongly divided, the ‘criminals’ choose their lives
- the way that criminals are motivated by greed and ill-gotten gains, Fagin, Monks, etc
- Oliver’s living amongst the criminal fraternity and not being corrupted (there is an innate sense of goodness and morality in him, which protects him)
- Nancy’s choosing to do good to protect Oliver, even though she knows she will suffer for it
- the more ‘respectable’ members of society, like the Sowerberrys, who do not become criminals, though their hearts may be hard and their behaviour cruel
- it is not criminals who are products of society but the poor and children, as exemplified by the workhouse, a symbol of the collective callousness at society’s heart – the child at the centre of its brutality, 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 07*****Brighton Rock* – Graham Greene**

‘*Brighton Rock* is ultimately a moral novel.’

To what extent do you agree with this view? Remember to include in your answer relevant detailed exploration of Greene’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 *Brighton Rock* through the lens of **crime writing**, 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 (organisational decisions, beginning and ending, uses of climaxes, relating to where Greene focuses on the novel’s moral issues), Pinkie’s crime is punished at the end of the novel
- the significance of the opening sentence in terms of the moral outcome and the novel’s trajectory
- the use of the third person perspective which is detached yet knowledgeable – on the side of moral order
- shifting focalisation – mostly Pinkie and Ida respectively
- use of contrast, religious language, vivid description, etc.

Given that this is an **open book** exam, comment on the ways meanings are shaped should 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 writing about whether *Brighton Rock* is ‘a moral novel’, students will specifically be engaging with

moral, social, religious and literary contexts. In discussing whether the novel is ‘ultimately’ moral, students will be engaging with and demonstrating understanding of the significance and influence of the context of when the novel was written and how it has been received. Focus might be on:

- Brighton’s importance as a setting – the garish materialism of the seaside town is also a motif for Heaven and Hell – (Pinkie’s Paradise Place and Prewitt’s appropriation of Marlowe’s, ‘Why this is Hell, nor are we out of it’)
- Pinkie is finally punished for his life of crime, he is tracked down by Ida who supports one of his former gang members, his face is burned with his own bottle of ‘vitriol’ and he topples over the cliff edge
- the possibility of Pinkie’s being ‘saved’ in accordance with his Catholic beliefs at the last moment
- the ultimate focus on Catholicism rather than materialism
- Greene’s depiction of Pinkie’s poverty-stricken background and impoverished attitude to feelings and sex making his final illumination and disappearance look like the work of Providence/God
- the idea that a last-minute ‘repentance’ can absolve you of all your sins – which could be seen as essentially ‘immoral’ (Pinkie’s adherence to ‘between the stirrup and the ground’)
- the literary context of the moral, didactic novel
- the social context of the 1930s’ underworld, the emerging street gangs of the 20th century, etc

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

**With respect to connections with the wider crime writing genre:**

In writing about whether *Brighton Rock* is ultimately a moral novel, students will be connecting with the crime writing element of ‘morality’ and punishment that they have met in other reading.

Focus might be on:

- Pinkie’s paying with his life for his criminal activities
- the sense that there is justice operating in the world – Fred Hale who is so brutally murdered at the start of the novel is avenged at the end
- the sense that there is a higher order which ensures that debts are paid
- the innocent Rose who Pinkie intends to murder is saved (though a horrible fate awaits her after Pinkie’s death when she is to learn of his contempt for her)
- Ida as Pinkie’s nemesis, representing divine reckoning, 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:

- what ‘moral’ and ‘ultimately’ mean or might mean
- the ‘malefactor’ Pinkie’s being punished

- the power of good forces like Ida and her desire for justice on earth
- Ida's desire to protect Rose, etc

Some will disagree and focus on:

- the cold-hearted power struggle between the gangs which dominate the novel
- the 'buying' of Rose's silence through Pinkie's and Rose's marriage
- Pinkie's callous treatment of Rose and his determination to kill her
- Pinkie's religious beliefs which might be considered illusory and that this world is all there is, this world being dark and unforgiving
- the novel's ending and the probability that Rose's happiness will be unnecessarily shattered because she is to listen to a recording Pinkie made for her which she thinks is a declaration of love but in which he says: "God damn you, you little bitch, why can't you go home for ever and let me be?", 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 08*****The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* - Agatha Christie**

‘Agatha Christie’s *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* illustrates that those affected by crime are rarely innocent.’

To what extent do you agree with this view? Remember to include in your answer relevant detailed exploration of Christie’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 *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* through the lens of **crime writing**, 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 (organisational decisions, beginning and ending, uses of climaxes, relating to where Christie focuses on those affected by crime)
- a new revelation is exposed in each of the twenty-seven chapters, creating momentum and suspense
- the use of the set piece of Poirot’s theatrical exposure of all the characters’ crimes (a mock trial of sorts)
- use of Sheppard as first person (unreliable) narrator whose deceptions include tricking the reader, encouraging us to trust him, only to betray us at the novel’s conclusion
- use of voice of Sheppard’s sister, Caroline, as channel for village gossip and alternative perspective, voice of Poirot, the rational, dispassionate ‘foreigner’ who brings together multiple strands
- use of straightforward language
- choice of names, etc.

Given that this is an **open book** exam, comment on the ways meanings are shaped should 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 writing about whether ‘*The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*’ illustrates that those affected by crime are rarely innocent’, students will specifically be engaging with moral, social and literary contexts. In discussing whether those affected by crime are ‘rarely innocent’, students will be engaging with and demonstrating understanding of the significance and influence of the context of when the novel was written and how it has been received. Focus might be on:

- the use of setting (time and place) – the English rural society of the 1920s where Poirot has retired to grow his marrows, the peaceful small town of Kings Abbot which is disrupted by the death of Mrs Ferras and the murder of Ackroyd
- the growing influences of American crime and the drug culture
- middle-class society and its veneer of respectability which masks deeper immoral behaviours (used to shock Christie’s readers who would have expected criminals to come from the lower social orders)
- the literary sub-genre of the locked room mystery (no-one could apparently get in or out of the room during the time specified for Ackroyd’s death), etc

**AO4 Explore connections across literary texts.**

**With respect to connections with the wider crime writing genre:**

In writing about whether those affected by crime are rarely innocent, students will be connecting with the crime writing elements of ‘criminal behaviour’, ‘victims’ and ‘innocence’.

Focus might be on:

- the social milieu of the middle class novel and its faux respectability
- notions of innocence in other crime reading
- the detective as innocent and preserver of innocence
- the investigation by Poirot, in which all characters have something to hide and none shows real feeling for the murder victim (for example, Elizabeth Russell is hiding an illegitimate son who is a drug user, Flora has stolen forty pounds from Ackroyd’s room, Parker has blackmailed his former employer, etc)
- Dr Sheppard who seems to be a friend of the victim, who takes on the role of Poirot’s side-kick, but is himself the ‘scoundrel who drove’ Mrs Ferras to her death and the villain who betrays and murders the man who places immense trust in him, 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:

- Poirot's insistence that everyone is hiding something, ie not telling the whole truth and therefore not innocent, eg Flora Ackroyd, Ursula Bourne, and of course, Dr Sheppard, who all have a 'back-story': 'All these people tonight are suspects. Amongst them I shall find the person who killed Mr Ackroyd' (Poirot)
- all characters have withheld part or parts of the truth
- Ackroyd's own lack of innocence, his part in another crime
- the way the individuals are more interested in covering their own tracks than feeling any grief for the murder victim
- the murky middle-class world represented in Christie's novel, etc

Some will disagree and focus on:

- the character of Caroline, the Doctor's sister, who is closest to the 'major criminal', but completely innocent/unaware of his guilt
- Poirot who is also 'touched by crime' but is a priest-like figure who takes confessions and roots out truth without being 'contaminated'
- the fact that the characters are all stock characters and that their implications in crime or otherwise are unremarkable, not convincing enough to be innocent or guilty, 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 09*****Hamlet* – William Shakespeare**

‘Hamlet is more the detective figure than he is the avenging murderer.’

To what extent do you agree with this view? Remember to include in your answer relevant detailed exploration 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. Some ideas will inevitably address more than one AO.

Examiners must also remember that, because students have read and studied *Hamlet* through the lens of **crime writing**, 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 (organisational decisions, beginning and ending, uses of climaxes, relating to where Shakespeare focuses on Hamlet as a detective figure or perhaps an avenging murderer)
- Hamlet’s soliloquies in which he debates what he needs to do and why – which shows the detective’s thought processes and deductive thinking
- the use of dialogue, contrasts, dramatic foils, dramatic action, the use of language
- the use of the supernatural
- the use of the court for the play within the play, the same setting for the final duel with Laertes, etc

Given that this is an **open book** exam, comment on the ways meanings are shaped should 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 play:**

In writing about whether Hamlet is more ‘the detective figure’ than the ‘avenging murderer’,

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students will specifically be engaging with moral, social, political, religious and literary contexts. In discussing whether he is 'more' one type of figure than another, students will be engaging with and demonstrating understanding of the significance and influence of the context of when the play was written and how it was received. Focus might be on:

- Hamlet as hero or victim of the revenge play
- his obligations to his father to avenge the foul murder
- Hamlet as agent of divine law as he tries to discover if his uncle has committed regicide
- from a political perspective, Hamlet is seeking to cleanse Denmark, to discover and punish the root cause of its rottenness and to restore social order
- Hamlet's need to search for truth in becoming the detective figure – he wants proof of Claudius' guilt
- the religious aspects of murder which Hamlet debates
- the use of setting – the court of Elsinore, the place where Claudius' murder of Old Hamlet took place and where Hamlet investigates the backstory, etc

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

##### **With respect to connections with the wider crime writing genre:**

In writing about whether Hamlet is more a detective figure than the avenging murderer, students will be connecting with the crime writing elements of 'detectives' and 'punishment' and 'revenge'.

Focus might be on:

- Hamlet as detective who investigates the Ghost's claims that Old Hamlet was murdered by poison, he uses the disguise of madness to aid his investigation
- the 'Mousetrap scene' which is a classic set-up situation where Hamlet enlists travelling actors to perform a play about regicide to catch 'the conscience of the king'
- Hamlet then attempts to carry out punishment, becoming the administer of justice and executioner, 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:

- Hamlet's desire to be certain of the truth, hence his becoming detective
- his use of the play 'to catch the conscience of the king' and make sure Claudius displays his guilt
- Hamlet's questioning of the reality of the ghost
- his suspicions of his mother and his questioning of her
- his setting of traps and being suspicious of counter actions from Claudius (leading to Polonius' death)
- his testing and interrogation of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern

- his opportunities to kill Claudius at prayer ('now might I do it, pat') but his constant prevarication
- his not wanting to be a murderer/avenger, etc

Some will disagree and focus on:

- his determination to resolve the situation once he is sure of the effect of 'the play within the play'
- his obsession with Claudius' guilt
- his wanting to carry out his dead father's wishes
- his ruthless attitude and lack of guilt in causing the deaths of Ophelia and Polonius
- his killing of his own mother and Laertes as well as Claudius
- the play's ending with a display more of the spirit of murder than of investigation and detection, 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 10**

‘In crime writing there are always victims.’

Explore the significance of the ways that victims are presented in **two** crime texts you have studied.

**[25 marks]**

**Some possible content** is given below. It suggests some of the ways the Assessment Objectives might be addressed, but as ‘significance’ relates to contextual, structural, linguistic and interpretative issues many strands listed could easily address more than one AO.

Examiners must also remember that, because students will be writing about the two texts through the lens of **crime writing**, 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 in relation to victims in crime writing
- 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 authorial methods:** (comments on method need to be embedded into the argument about the significance of victims in crime writing).

Focus might be on:

- the text’s form of drama, poetry or prose – dramatic form of *Hamlet* to show the abuse of Ophelia by a sequence of men in different scenes
- the use of narrators – the omniscient judgemental narrator of ‘Peter Grimes’ who shows sympathy for Peter’s victim boys
- the uses of text titles – ‘Oliver Twist’ drawing attention to the novel’s victim hero
- the uses of structural features – the seven parts of ‘The Rime of the Ancient Mariner’ with the victim (albatross) being referred to at the end of the parts either directly or indirectly
- the uses of language – the use of descriptive detail in ‘Porphyria’s Lover’ to highlight Porphyria’s victim status
- dialogue – in *Atonement* when Robbie is wrongly accused
- the use of chronology, use of time jumps in Atkinson to draw attention to Joanna as first child and then adult victim, etc

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

**With respect to significance of contexts:**

Focus might be on:

- settings (time and place) – the quiet setting of King’s Abbot and Ackroyd’s middle-class home for his murder
- social – the dark underworld of *Oliver Twist* and how this impacts on the victim children
- moral – the didactic nature of *Brighton Rock* and how Rose as victim is rescued at the end
- psychological – the descent into madness of Ophelia which result from her suffering and torment, etc

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

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

Focus might be on:

- victims of physical crimes – those attacked like Joanna or murdered like Polonius, Hale, the Duchess and Nancy
- victims of psychological crime – Ophelia, the trooper in ‘The Ballad of Reading Gaol’
- victims of sexual crimes – Porphyria
- victims who are also criminals – the Mariner, the trooper, Nancy
- victims who are children – Oliver, the boys in ‘Peter Grimes’, Joanna, Jessica and Joseph Mason
- victims who are women – Mrs Mason, Porphyria, Rose, 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 readers might react, for example:

- Browning, Crabbe and Wilde – the Duchess, Porphyria, Elise, Pauline, presented with varying degrees of sympathy and detachment; Peter’s victims who are life’s unfortunate victims of an uncaring society (they are workhouse boys) and of Peter, Sam and the boy with ‘manners soft and mild’, Peter’s father, perhaps Peter himself, the trooper in The Ballad of Reading Gaol who is also a criminal – and by extension all who face the death penalty, etc
- Coleridge – the albatross, perhaps Christianity if read in an allegorical way, the crew who become accomplices, the Wedding Guest who misses the wedding feast, perhaps the Mariner – a victim of vengeful spirits, etc
- Atkinson – the young Joanna and her family, the older Joanna Hunter, Reggie perhaps, Billy, a case could be made for others, etc
- McEwan – Robbie and Cecilia, Briony – of her parents and her own imagination, the soldiers in war, the reader an unsuspecting victim of authorial deception, etc
- Dickens – Oliver who is sentimentalised, Nancy, any of the boys in Fagin’s pay, Agnes, Mr Brownlow, etc
- Greene – Hale, Rose, Spicer – comment might well focus on some of the victims themselves being criminals, perhaps Pinkie who is a criminal and perhaps victim of the world in which he lives, etc
- Christie – Ackroyd, Mr Ferrars in the back story, Ralph who is the main suspect, perhaps the reader who feels cheated at the trickery of Christie’s use of the unreliable narrator, etc
- Shakespeare – The Ghost, Hamlet, Ophelia, Polonius, Laertes, perhaps Gertrude, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern who are all victims of the rotteness at the heart of Denmark

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which results from Claudius' killing of his brother and the king, 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 11**

‘Plotting and calculation are central ingredients of crime literature.’

Explore the significance of plotting and calculation as they are presented in **two** crime texts you have studied.

**[25 marks]**

**Some possible content** is given below. It suggests some of the ways the Assessment Objectives might be addressed, but as ‘significance’ relates to contextual, structural, linguistic and interpretative issues, many strands listed could easily address more than one AO.

Examiners must also remember that, because students will be writing about two texts through the lens of **crime writing**, 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 in relation to plotting and calculation in crime writing
- 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 authorial methods:** (comments on method need to be embedded into the argument about the significance of victims in crime writing).

Focus might be on:

- the text’s form of drama, poetry or prose – the prose form of *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* and the careful plotting through the twenty-seven chapters, each of which reveals a new turn of event
- the use of narrators – the first person narrator of the Duke who carefully constructs his narrative to the envoy of the father of his next wife
- the uses of text titles – ‘When Will There Be Good News?’ drawing attention to the way Atkinson plots her story
- the uses of structural features – the systematic revelation of details as Porphyria’s lover relives the events of the night in which he murders Porphyria and sits with her dead body in the narrative present
- the uses of language – Hamlet’s calculated ‘mad’ speech as he seeks to disguise his tracking of Claudius
- dialogue – Poirot’s carefully orchestrated speech as he sets out to reveal Ackroyd’s murderer in the denouement
- the use of chronology - in ‘The Rime of the Ancient Mariner’ as Coleridge begins in the narrative present and then moves back to plot the Mariner’s story, etc.

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

**With respect to significance of contexts:**

Focus might be on:

- settings (time and place) – the court of Elsinore for the calculated plot of Hamlet to exact revenge on Claudius
- social – the dark underworld of *Brighton Rock* and how this impacts on Pinkie's plotting in his gang and Ida's plotting to bring him to justice
- moral – Crabbe's plotting of Peter's story within the moral framework of justice and retribution
- psychological – the careful plotting of Briony's novel as she seeks atonement, etc

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

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

Focus might be on:

- calculations by detectives – Poirot, Hamlet, Brodie
- plotting of criminals – Monks, Fagin, Pinkie, the Duke, the narrator of 'The Laboratory'
- plotting of crime writers – Christie, Atkinson, Greene, Crabbe

#### **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 readers might react. Students might also write about plotting and calculation in relation to authors and/or characters, for example:

- Browning, Crabbe and Wilde – the calculated delivery of the Duke as he tells his story with the purpose of influencing the envoy, the plotting of the poisoner in 'The Laboratory', Peter's calculation of where to obtain the slave boys and disguise their murders, etc
- Coleridge – the absence of calculation in the killing of the albatross, the calculation in telling his story to the man that must hear him, etc
- Atkinson – the writer's intricate use of coincidence and variety of characters who are woven into the story, the plotting/calculations made by the detectives and Reggie, etc
- McEwan – Briony's calculations both as a child and adult, her lying in wait for Robbie, her watching, her careful plotting of her novel which is, of course, McEwan's, etc
- Dickens – Dickens' intricate plotting in creating a variety of characters who are interwoven into Oliver's story, the plotting of Fagin, Monks, the Artful Dodger and Bill Sikes, the plotting of Brownlow to rescue Oliver, etc
- Greene – the plotting of Pinkie to try to buy Rose's complicity, the counter-plotting of Ida, the plotting of Greene as he takes the novel into a focus on Catholic doctrine in the second half of the story, etc
- Christie – the careful plotting of the writer in bringing the characters together, giving them motives, the calculation of the narrator who deliberately deceives the reader, the plotting of Poirot as he brings all suspects together, etc
- Shakespeare – the plotting of Hamlet as he tries to prove Claudius' guilt, Claudius' plotting as he sets traps for Hamlet and plots for his removal and death, Claudius' plotting in the murder of Old Hamlet, Laertes' and Polonius' plotting in spying on Ophelia, Shakespeare's plotting, as he drives all events to a tragic conclusion, 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.**

