

GCSE English Literature

English Hub School networks, Autumn 2017

Lessons from the first series

Published: October 2017





These free networking sessions feature extracts of scripts and student responses.

Access a greater number of full-length student responses with depth commentaries in our Mark scheme support resources.

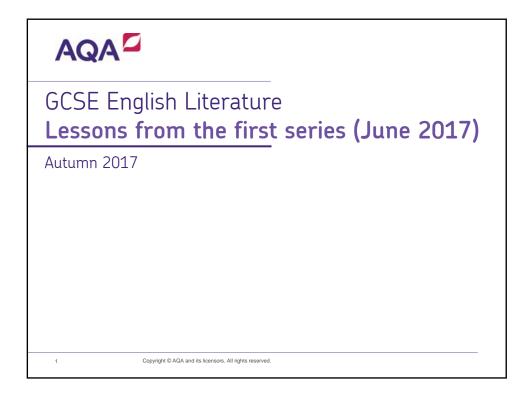
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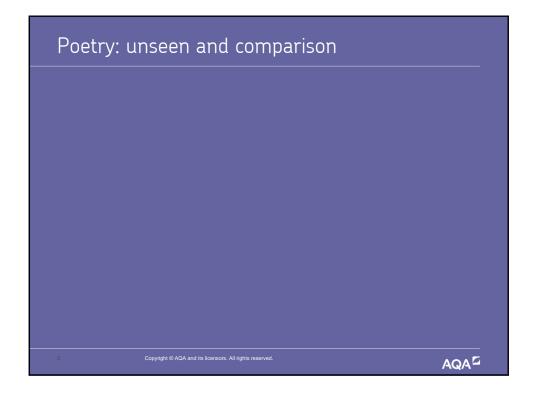
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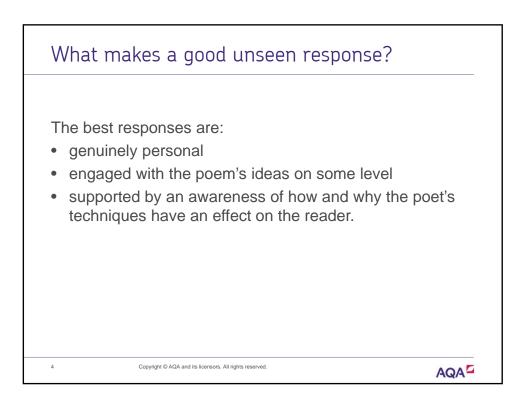
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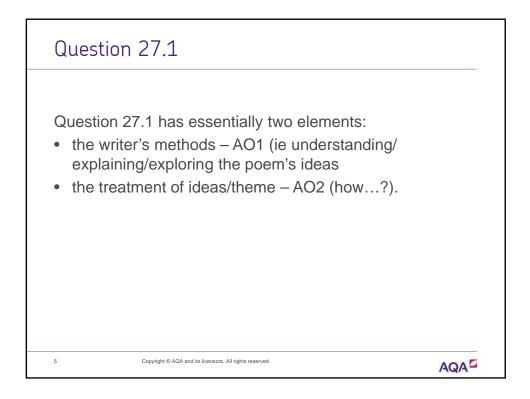
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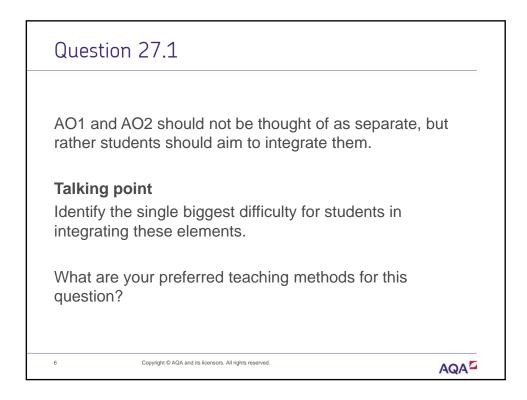


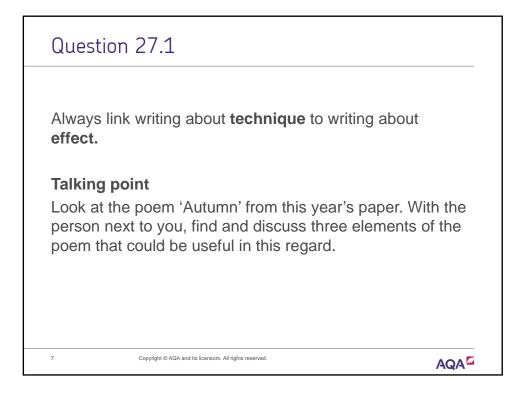


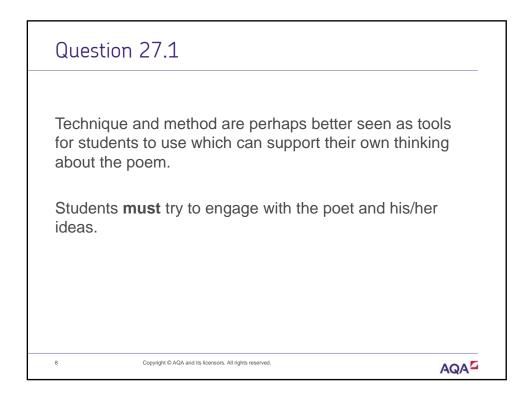


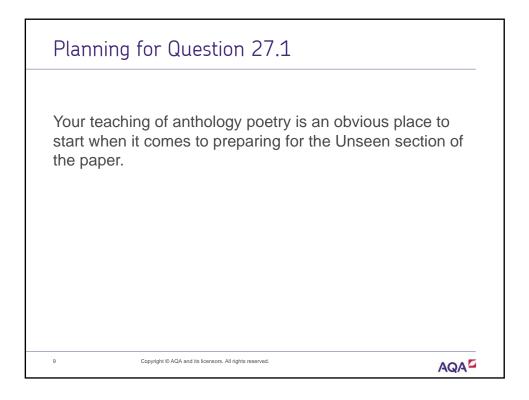


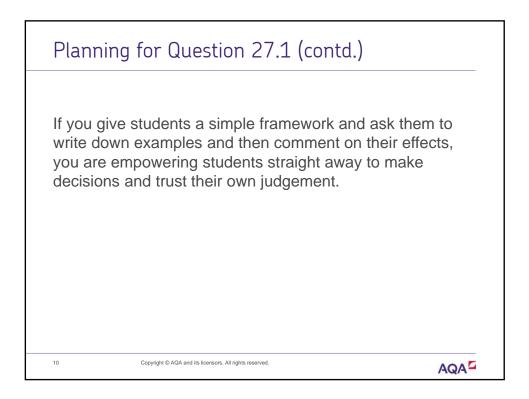


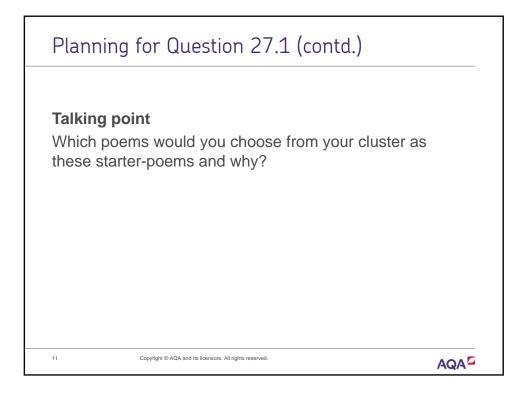


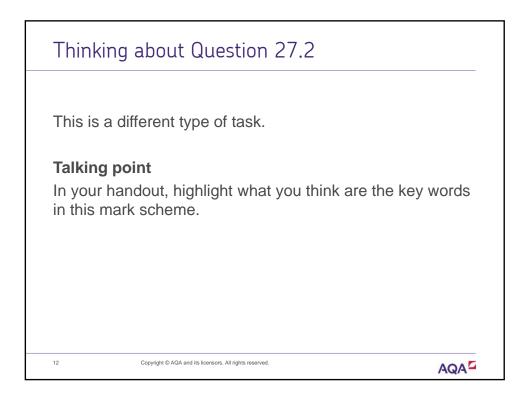


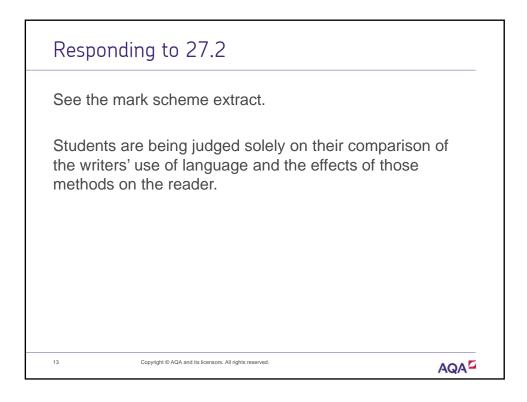


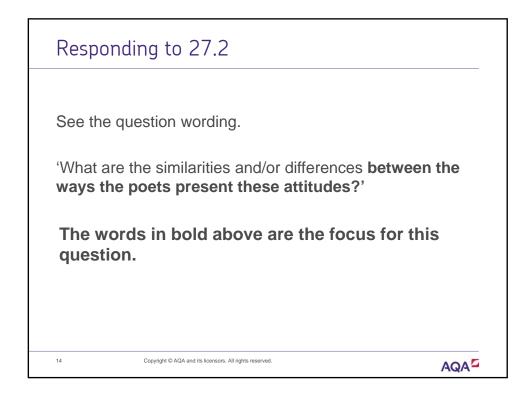


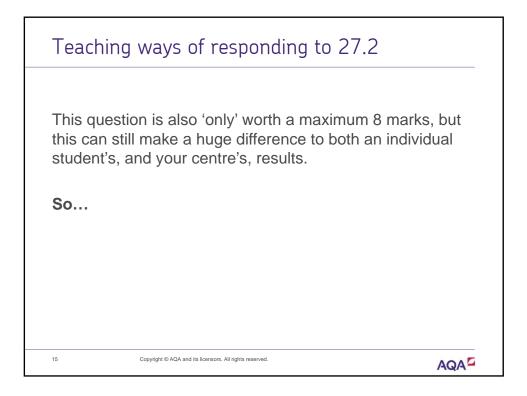


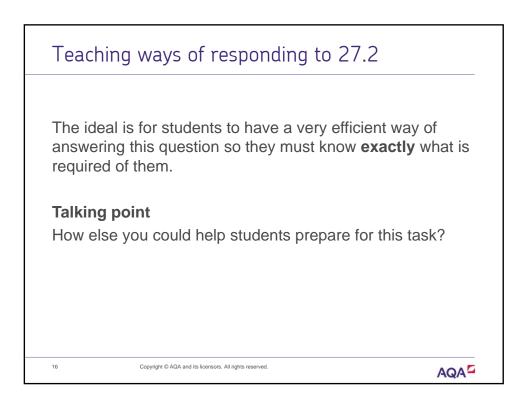


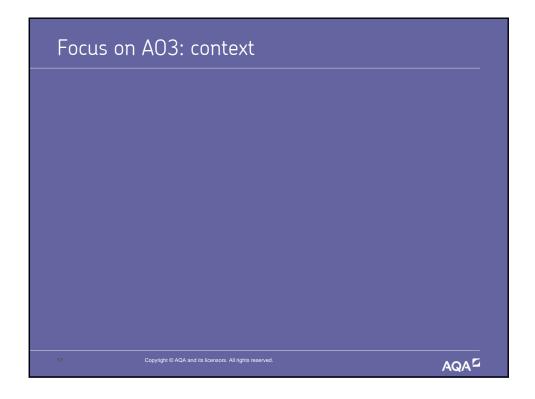


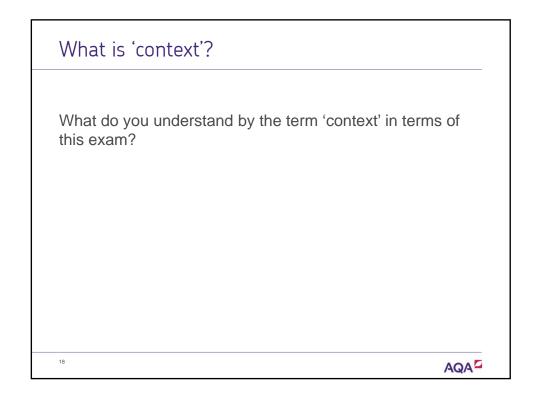


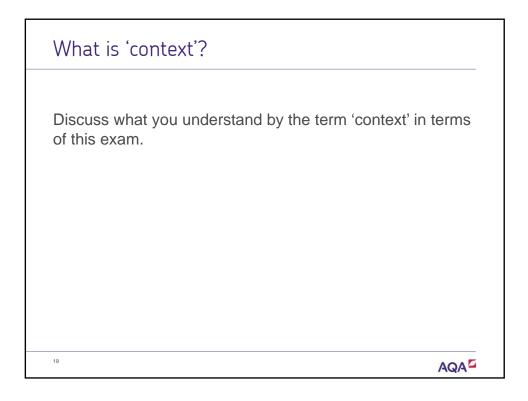


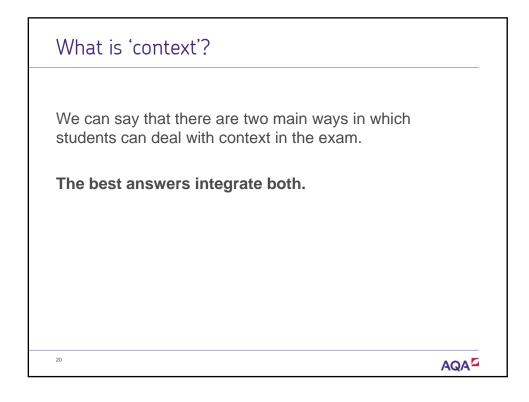


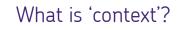












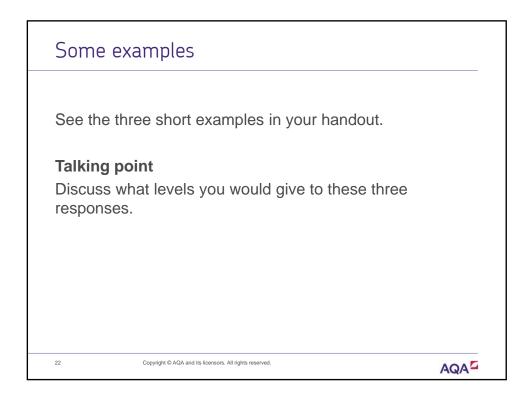
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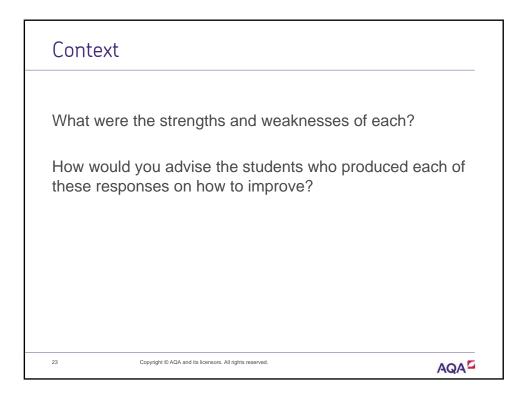
Two main ways students can deal with context:

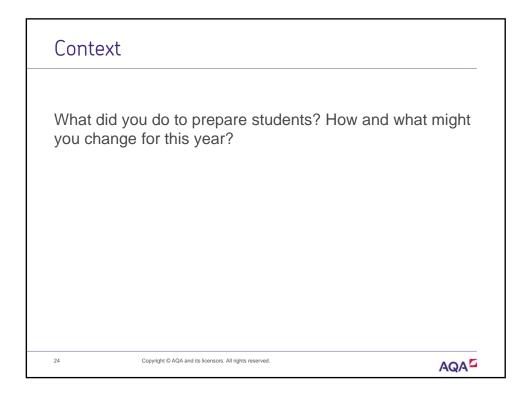
1) Specific knowledge which students have acquired throughout their course, usually taught by/explored with teachers. Example would be eg the class system and the conflict between capitalism and socialism in the first half of the C20 for 'An Inspector Calls'.

2) Students' direct response to the context implicit in the question they are answering eg 'How far does Priestley present Mrs Birling as an **unlikeable character?**'

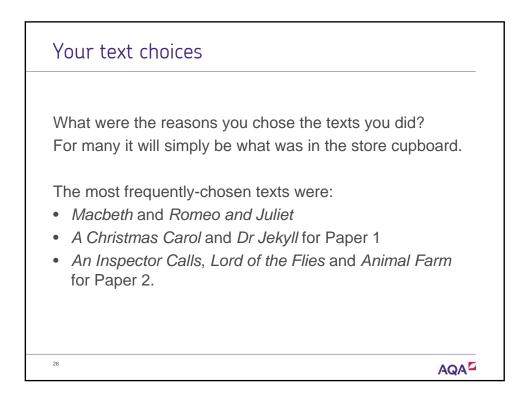
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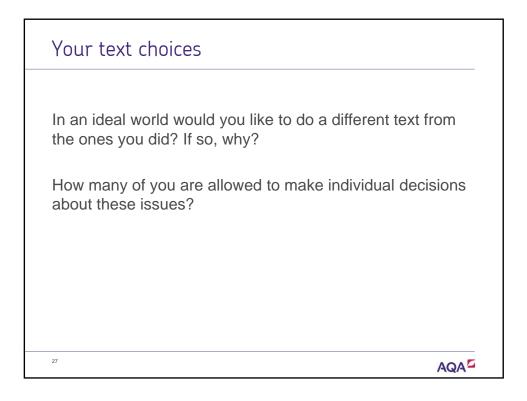


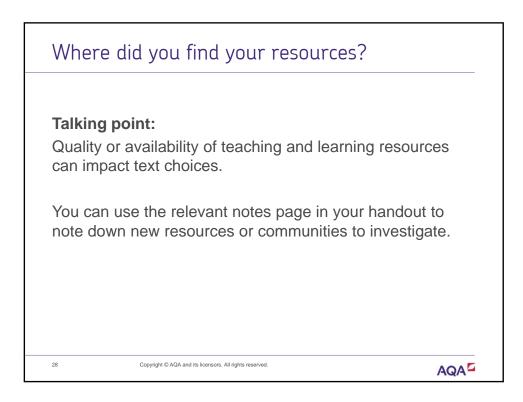


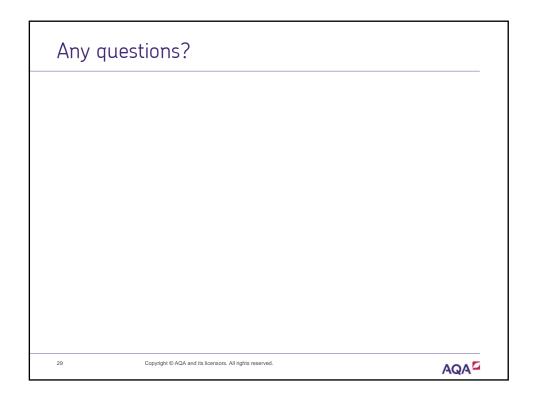










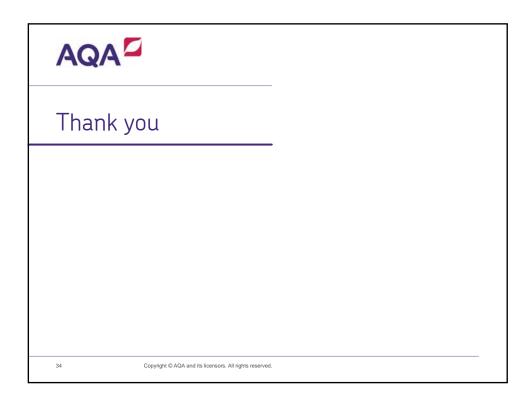


GCSE English	Literature: Feedback on t	the examinations
Location	Date	
Manchester	16 October 2017	
Birmingham	18 October 2017	
London	18 October 2017	
York	19 October 2017	
Online	20 October 2017	
Online	31 October 2017	
Online	03 November 2017	
Bristol	13 November 2017	
Southampton	14 November 2017	
London	20 November 2017	

GCSE English Lite	erature: Feedback o	n the examination
Location	Date	
Newcastle Upon tyne	20 November 2017	
Manchester	21 November 2017	
Guildford	22 November 2017	
Online	22 November 2017	
Birmingham	24 November 2017	
Oxford	24 November 2017	
Liverpool	30 November 2017	
Online	04 December 2017	
London	08 December 2017	
Manchester	08 December 2017	

GCSE English	Language: Feedback or	the examinations
Location	Date	
York	16 October 2017	
Manchester	18 October 2017	
Birmingham	20 October 2017	
Online	23 October 2017	
Online	31 October 2017	
Birmingham	20 November 2017	
Manchester	21 November 2017	
Liverpool	22 November 2017	
London	22 November 2017	
Online	22 November 2017	

GCSE English Lai	nguage: Feedback or	n the examinations
Location	Date	
Southampton	23 November 2017	
Oxford	27 November 2017	
Guildford	29 November 2017	
Newcastle upon Tyne	29 November 2017	
Bristol	30 November 2017	
Online	30 November 2017	
Manchester	06 December 2017	
Online	08 December 2017	
London	11 December 2017	



Poetry: unseen and comparison

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What makes a good unseen response?

The best responses are:

- genuinely personal
- engaged on some level with the poem's ideas
- supported by an awareness of how and why the poet's techniques have an effect on the reader.

If you are disappointed with the marks some of your students received for this section, it may be worth getting a few scripts back across a range of marks to look at them as a department. Your school examinations officer will help you with this, and tell you the fees.

Visit: aqa.org.uk/exams-administration/results-days/post-results

Question 27.1

In brief

Question 27.1 has essentially two elements:

- the writer's methods
 - AO1: eg understanding/explaining/exploring the poem's ideas.
- the treatment of ideas/theme
 - AO2: how?

These two elements should not be thought of as separate, but rather students should aim to integrate them.

Tips for students

It is probably better to work from the text outwards, in other words, **don't** decide what the poem is about and try to make the words 'fit' this interpretation.

Instead, look at the poet's word choices and using knowledge of poetic methods, and see what these suggest to you.

Talking point 1

Identify the single biggest difficulty for students in integrating AO1 and AO2.

Discuss your preferred teaching methods for this question.

Always link writing about technique to writing about effect.

For example:

'The writer uses enjambment all the way through the poem'

The above is level 1-2, but the below is towards level 3-4.

'The writer uses enjambment throughout the poem, for example, 'covering his tracks/With a deep multitude...', to suggest the confusion caused by Autumn'.

Question 27.1 cont.

This example is reproduced from June 2017's Paper 2. Find full past papers and support materials in our secure logged in area. Visit <u>aqa.org.uk/log-in</u> and navigate to Secure Key Materials (SKM).

Section C: Unseen poetry

Answer both questions in this section

	Autumn	
	Autumn arrives	
	Like an experienced robber	
	Grabbing the green stuff	
	Then cunningly covering his tracks	
5	With a deep multitude	
	Of colourful distractions.	
	And the wind,	
	The wind is his accomplice	
	Putting an air of chaos	
10	Into the careful diversions	
	So branches shake	
	And dead leaves are suddenly blown	
	In the faces of inquisitive strangers.	
	The theft chills the world,	
15	Changes the temper of the earth	
	Till the normally placid sky	
	Glows red with a quiet rage.	
		Alan Bold

In 'Autumn', how does the poet present the effects of the season of autumn?

[24 marks]

Talking point 2

With the person next to you, find and discuss three elements of the poem that could be useful in this regard.

Question 27.1 cont.

Some students are obviously given a checklist of techniques and methods to look for.

Examples include (but aren't limited to):

- imagery
- verse/ form and length

- alliteration
- rhyme

... etc, maybe with a mnemonic thrown in.

This is not necessarily a bad idea in itself, but it can be very limiting and actually unhelpful if students start with this 'list' and see the poem as essentially a technique-spotting exercise.

Such responses tend to be mechanistic – often determined to make things fit a pattern when they don't – and limited in the range and quality of interpretation. Technique and method are perhaps better seen as tools for students to use which can support their own thinking about the poem. Students **must** try to engage with the poet and his/her ideas.

Using the anthology

Your teaching of anthology poetry is an obvious place to start when it comes to preparing for the 'unseen' section of the paper. The nature of the two clusters means that it is easy to find two poems which share a common theme, but differ widely in their forms and approaches.

It can give students great confidence to start your Anthology teaching by presenting them with, for example, *Follower* or *War Photographer* and simply asking them what they think about it.

The more experience students have of: • a wide range of poems • making their own judgements • supporting judgements with evidence

...the better they will perform.

If you then give them a simple framework (eg interesting word choices, figurative language, form, another technique) and ask them to write down examples and then comment on their effects. By doing this you will be empowering students straight away to make decisions and trust their own judgement.

It's also very revealing if you then ask students to read some or all of the other poems in the collection just once and ask them to pick one which looks like it might be a good comparison. They often make startlingly sensible and interesting choices.

Talking point 3

Which poems would you choose from your cluster as these starter-poems and why?

Past and Present poetry anthology

Poems from Past and Present poetry anthology are listed below.

Schools are supplied with anthologies, but electronic copies are also available on the English e-Library. See <u>aqa.org.uk/elibrary</u>

Love and relationships

Armitage, Simon Barrett Browning, Elizabeth Browning, Robert Byron, Lord Causley, Charles Day Lewis, C Dooley, Maura Duffy, Carol Ann Hardy, Thomas Heaney, Seamus Mew, Charlotte Nagra, Daljit Sheers, Owen Shelley, Percy Bysshe Waterhouse, Andrew

Power and conflict

Agard, John Armitage, Simon Blake, William Browning, Robert Bysshe Shelley, Percy Dharker, Imtiaz Duffy, Carol Ann Garland, Beatrice Heaney, Seamus Hughes, Ted Owen, Wilfred Rumens, Carol Tennyson, Alfred Lord Weir, Jane Wordsworth, William Mother, any distance Sonnet 29 - 'I think of thee!' Porphyria's Lover When We Two Parted Eden Rock Walking Away Letters From Yorkshire Before You Were Mine Neutral Tones Follower The Farmer's Bride Singh Song! Winter Swans Love's Philosophy Climbing My Grandfather

Checking Out Me History Remains London My Last Duchess Ozymandias Tissue War Photographer Kamikaze Storm on the Island Bayonet Charge Exposure The émigree The Charge of the Light Brigade Poppies The Prelude: stealing the boat

Question 27.2

These extracts are from the June 2017 series. Visit <u>aqa.org.uk/log-in</u> to access.

	Today	
	If ever there were a spring day so perfect, so uplifted by a warm intermittent breeze	
	that it made you want to throw open all the windows in the house	
5	and unlatch the door to the canary's cage, indeed, rip the little door from its jamb*,	
	a day when the cool brick paths and the garden bursting with peonies**	
10	seemed so etched in sunlight that you felt like taking	
	a hammer to the glass paperweight on the living room end table,	
	releasing the inhabitants from their snow-covered cottage	
15	so they could walk out, holding hands and squinting	
	into this larger dome of blue and white, well, today is just that kind of day.	Billy Collins
	* jamb – the sides of a doorway or opening ** peonies – flowers	

2 7 . 2

In both 'Today' and 'Autumn' the speakers describe attitudes towards the seasons.

What are the similarities and/or differences between the ways the poets present these attitudes?

[8 marks]

Question 27.2 cont.

Talking point 4

What are the keywords in this mark scheme?

Mark	A0	Typical features of response
Level 4 7–8 marks	AO2	 Exploratory comparison of writers' use of language, structure and form with subject terminology used judiciously Convincing comparison of effects of writers' methods on reader
Level 3 5–6 marks	AO2	 Thoughtful comparison of writers' use of language and/or structure and/or form with subject terminology used effectively to support consideration of methods Comparative examination of effects of writers' methods on reader
Level 2 3–4 marks	AO2	 Relevant comparison of writers' use of language and/or structure and/or form with some relevant use of subject terminology Some comparison of effects of writers' methods on reader
Level 1 1–2 marks	AO2	 Some links between writers' use of language or structure or form Some links between effects of writers' methods on reader
0 marks	Nothing	worthy of credit/nothing written

The obvious thing to notice is that there is only one AO, and in every level there is a word which implies the need for students to compare. In no other part of the exam is this so explicit, so it is vital that students do it.

Writers' use of language

The other potential difficulty in this question is that students are being judged solely on their response to 'writers' use of language' and the effects of those methods on the reader.

Look at the question from this year's paper on the previous page.

In both 'Today' and 'Autumn' the speakers describe attitudes towards the seasons.

What are the similarities and/or differences between the ways the poets present these attitudes?

The words in bold above are the focus of this question.

We found some students wrote about attitudes and not **methods** here, and so received very little, if any, credit for this.

Question 27.2 cont.

By this point in the exam, students are generally quite tired and maybe not at their best.

This question is only worth a maximum 8 marks, but this can still make a huge difference to both an individual student's, and your centre's, results.

Tips for students

Ideally, students:

- have a very efficient way of approaching this question to identify exactly what is required of them
- do not have to outline the ideas/attitudes in one or both poems (which is a waste of time).
- do not feel the need to write more than a side
- will find methods and effects from both poems and compare them
- have the annotation skills to find and organise useful things to say.

Talking point 5

Discuss how else you could help students prepare for this task.

Focus on AO3: context

Focus on AO3: context

What do you understand by 'context' in terms of this exam?

The two main ways students approach context are:

- via specific knowledge acquired throughout the course, usually taught by and explored with teachers. For example, 'the class system and the conflict between capitalism and socialism in the first half of the C20' in *An Inspector Calls*.
- via direct response to the context implicit in the question. For example, 'How far does Priestley present Mrs Birling as an **unlikeable character**?'

The best answers integrate these two approaches.

Student examples of context

'The old generation eg Mr Birling and Mrs Birling do not care that Eva Smith died.'

'When Mr Birling congratulates Edna the maid on her cooking Mrs Birling reacts displeased. We see here Mrs Birling is a character who does not believe people of a lower class should be respected. She does not value their work.'

'Mrs Birling repeatedly shows no sympathy for Eva Smith. This echoes her social class because she as a higher class woman was not expected to feel sympathy for a lower class person. This however contrasts with the charity that Mrs Birling runs for women in need. Therefore the audience can think that Mrs Birling is not running the charity for the good of lower class women but to earn social respect and show off her status.' The above extracts are indicative of levels 1, 3 and 5 respectively. The summer 2017 series showed most centres had got to grips with 'context' for the purposes of the exam.

Would you prepare differently?

Talking point 6

What levels would you have given to the three extracts above?

What strengths and weaknesses are shown and how would you advise students to improve?

Reproduced below are pages 9-11 from the June 2017 mark scheme for Paper 2. The full version can be found on the Secure Key Materials section of eAQA. Navigate to <u>aqa.org.uk/log-in</u>

Mark	AO	Typical features	How to arrive at a mark
Level 6 Convincing, critical analysis and exploration 26–30	AO1	Critical, exploratory, conceptualised response to task and whole text Judicious use of precise references to support interpretation(s)	At the top of the level, a candidate's response is likely to be a critical, exploratory, well-structured argument. It takes a conceptualised approach to the full task supported by a range of judicious references. There will be a fine-grained and insightful analysis of language and form and structure supported by judicious use of subject terminology. Convincing exploration of one or
marks	AO2	Analysis of writer's methods with subject terminology used	more ideas/ perspectives/ contextual factors/ interpretations.
		judiciously Exploration of effects of writer's methods on reader	At the bottom of the level, a candidate will hav Level 5 and be starting to demonstrate element of exploratory thought and/or analysis of writer's methods and /or contexts.
	AO3	Exploration of ideas/ perspectives/ contextual factors shown by specific, detailed links between context/ text/ task	
Level 5 Thoughtful, developed consideration	AO1	Thoughtful, developed response to task and whole text Apt references integrated into interpretation(s)	At the top of the level, a candidate's response is likely to be thoughtful, detailed and developed. It takes a considered approach to the full task with references integrated into interpretation; there will be a detailed examination of the effects of language and/or structure and/or form supported
21–25 marks	AO2	Examination of writer's methods with subject terminology used effectively to support consideration of methods	by apt use of subject terminology. Examination of ideas/ perspectives/ contextual factors, possibly including alternative interpretations/ deeper meanings. At the bottom of the level, a candidate will have
		Examination of effects of writer's methods on reader	Level 4 and be starting to demonstrate elements of thoughtful consideration and/or examination of writer's methods and/or contexts.

AO3	Thoughtful consideration
	of ideas/ perspectives/
	contextual factors
	shown by examination
	of detailed links between
	context/text/task

Level 4	AO1	Clear, explained	At the top of the level, a candidate's response is
		response to task and	likely to be clear, sustained and consistent. It
Clear		whole text	takes a focused response to the full task which
understandin			demonstrates clear understanding. It uses a
g		Effective use of	range of references effectively to illustrate and
		references to support	justify explanation; there will be clear explanation
16–20		explanation	of the effects of a range of writer's methods
marks	AO2	Clear explanation of	supported by appropriate use of subject
		writer's methods with	terminology. Clear understanding of
		appropriate use of	ideas/perspectives/contextual factors.
		relevant subject	
		terminology	At the bottom of the level, a candidate will have
			Level 3 and be starting to demonstrate elements
		Understanding of	of understanding and/or explanation of writer's
		effects of writer's	methods and/or contexts.
		methods on reader	
	AO3	Clear understanding	
		of ideas/perspectives/	
		contextual factors	
		shown by specific	
		links between	
	101	context/text/task	
Level 3	AO1	Some explained	At the top of the level, a candidate's response is
Evalained		response to task and whole text	likely to be explanatory in parts. It focuses on the
Explained, structured		whole lext	full task with a range of points exemplified by relevant references from the text; there will be
comments		References used to	identification of effects of a range of writer's
Comments		support a range of	methods supported by some relevant terminology.
11–15		relevant comments	Explanation of some relevant contextual factors.
marks	AO2	Explained/relevant	
marko	702	comments on writer's	At the bottom of the level, a candidate will have
		methods with some	Level 2 and be starting to explain and/or make
		relevant use of	relevant comments on writer's methods and/or
		subject terminology	contexts.
		,	
		Identification of effects	
		of writer's methods on	
		reader	
	AO3	Some understanding	
		of implicit ideas/	
		perspectives/contextu	
		al factors shown by	
		links between	
		context/text/task	

Level 2 Supported, relevant comments 6–10 marks	AO1 AO2	Supported response to task and text Comments on references Identification of writers' methods Some reference to	At the top of the level, a candidate's response is likely to be relevant and supported by some explanation. It will include some focus on the task with relevant comments and some supporting references from the text. There will be identification of effects of deliberate choices made by writer with some reference to subject terminology. Awareness of some contextual factors.
		subject terminology	At the bottom of the level, a candidate's response will have Level 1 and be starting to focus on the task and/or starting to show
	AO3	Some awareness of implicit ideas/contextual factors	awareness of the writer making choices and/or awareness of contexts.
Level 1 Simple, explicit comments 1–5 marks	AO1	Simple comments relevant to task and text Reference to relevant details	At the top of the level, a candidate's response is likely to be narrative and/or descriptive in approach. It may include awareness of the task and provide appropriate reference to text; there will be simple identification of method with possible reference to subject terminology. Simple comments/responses to context, usually explicit.
	AO2	Awareness of writer making deliberate choices Possible reference to	At the bottom of the level, a candidate's response will show some familiarity with the text.
	AO3	subject terminology Simple comment on explicit ideas/contextual factors	
0 marks	Nothir	ng worthy of credit/nothing	written

Text choices

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Text choices

Why did you choose the texts you did? For many it will simply be what was in the store cupboard.

All texts were attempted in the summer 2017 series, but these were the most frequently-chosen ones.

Paper 1	Paper 2
Macbeth	An Inspector Calls
Romeo and Juliet	Lord of the Flies
A Christmas Carol	Animal Farm
The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde	

Talking point 7

Some work in departments where text choices and decisions about content are made hierarchically with little discussion. There are strengths and weaknesses of this top-down approach; which approach do you believe to be most effective and why?

Are you allowed to make individual decisions about these issues?

Talking point 8

Quality or availability of teaching and learning resources can impact text choices. Can you recommend a go-to source or a particular place for a specific text? Networking communities on the TES, Twitter (#TeamEnglish or #EngChat) or Mumsnet can be just as valuable.

Use the notes page overleaf to note down new resources or communities to investigate.

Contact us

T: 0161 953 7504

E: english-gcse@aqa.org.uk

aqa.org.uk/english

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