



AS

English Literature B

7716/1A Literary genres: Drama: Aspects of tragedy
Mark scheme

7716
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Version 1.0: Final Mark Scheme

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.

Information for Examiners marking Aspects of tragedy: closed book

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

The significance of closed book: Section B

Examiners must understand that in marking a closed book exam there are examining implications. Students do not have their texts in front of them, so while it is expected that they will use quotations, it is also legitimate to use close textual references. They will have had to memorise quotations so there may be some errors which should not be over penalised. Detailed discussions of particular sections of texts are less likely here than in open book exams. Instead, students may range broadly across their texts as they construct their arguments.

There are specific issues for AO2 – how meanings are shaped in texts. There is, with closed book, the expectation that students will not have the texts in front of them, so although they will sometimes be able to make specific references to structural and organisational issues, at other times they will be more general.

Arriving at Marks

1. All questions are framed to address all the Assessment Objectives (AOs). Weightings are given above the generic mark scheme. Answers are marked holistically but, when deciding upon a mark in a band, examiners should bear in mind the relative weightings of the assessment objectives (see page 5) and be careful not to over/under credit a particular skill. 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 students 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 students 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 students are likely to write about, examiners should be willing to reward what is actually there – **provided of course, that it is relevant to the question being asked.**
5. Examiners should remember that there is not only one right answer. Students' 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 student introduces unusual or unorthodox ideas.
6. Examiners should remember that length and quality are not synonymous. Some brief answers may be relevant and concise. Equally, long answers may be diffuse and repetitive.
7. If answers are short or incomplete, examiners can only reward what is there and assess accordingly. Some further credit may be given to answers finished in note form.

Using the Mark Bands

8. When placing answers in mark bands, examiners need to look closely at the descriptors and the detailed generic mark bands on page 7. The key words for the bands are important and are printed below.

MARK BAND DESCRIPTORS	
Band 5 (21–25)	perceptive/assured
Band 4 (16–20)	coherent/thorough
Band 3 (11–15)	straightforward/relevant
Band 2 (6–10)	simple/generalised
Band 1 (1–5)	largely irrelevant, largely misunderstood, largely inaccurate

9. Answers placed at the top of the band will securely address the descriptors; answers at the lower end of the band will securely address the descriptors below and begin to show the qualities of the band into which you are placing them. Careful judgements need to be made about marks in the middle of the range; here it is likely that the key descriptors will be more intermittent but still clearly evident.
10. There will be occasions when an answer addresses descriptors in different bands; in such cases, the 'best-fit' model applies. Here examiners will need to exercise a different kind of judgement, looking to see where the answer can be most fairly and appropriately placed in terms of its quality against the descriptors.
11. Examiners must remember that the mark bands are not equivalent to grades: grades are decided by the awarding committee at the end of each session.

Advice about marking each section

Section A

12. Examiners need to bear in mind the following key points when marking extract based questions:
- does the student have an overview of the extract?
 - has the student written about dramatic method?
 - has the student quoted from the extract to support ideas?
 - the student's AO1 competence.

In the case of a significant omission to an answer, ie an omission which prevents the candidate from fully answering the question, then the examiner should not give a mark higher than Band 3. Such an answer is likely to be given a mark lower than Band 3.

Section B

13. Examiners need to bear in mind the following key points when marking questions based on single texts:
- has the student engaged in a relevant debate or constructed a relevant argument?
 - has the student referred to different parts of the text to support their views?
 - has the student referred to the author's dramatic method?
 - the student's AO1 competence.

In the case of a significant omission to an answer, ie an omission which prevents the candidate from fully answering the question, then the examiner should not give a mark higher than Band 3. Such an answer is likely to be given a mark lower than Band 3.

Annotation

14. Examiners should remember that annotation is directed solely to senior examiners.
15. In addition to giving a mark, examiners should write a brief summative comment indicating how the mark has been arrived at. These comments are likely to mirror the appropriate mark band descriptors but comments must not be mechanical. Examiners need to describe student performance.
16. Please remember that scripts can go back to students, so although your audience is a senior examiner, you must express your views temperately.
17. The following symbols can be used when marking scripts:
- tick for a good point, idea, reference etc
 - REP for repetition
 - IR for irrelevance
 - ? for when meaning is not clear.

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

18. Use the Model Marked Script for guidance.

The Assessment Objectives and their significance

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

The AOs are as follows:

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

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts. (12%)

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations. (12%)

Mark Scheme

It is important to remember that these students are 16 to 17 years old, so we are judging their skills at a midway point in Key Stage 5.

Weightings for each question are as follows:

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

Mark	AO	Typical features	How to arrive at mark
Band 5 Perceptive/Assured 21-25 marks ‘ 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"> perceptive, assured and sophisticated argument in relation to the task assured use of literary critical concepts and terminology; mature and impressive expression 	This band is characterised by perceptive and assured work which shows confidence, sharpness of mind and sophistication in relation to the task. At the top of the band students are consistently assured and will demonstrate sensitivity and perception 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 perception but with less consistency and evenness.
	AO2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> perceptive understanding of authorial methods in relation to the task assured engagement with how meanings are shaped by the methods used 	
	AO3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> perceptive understanding of the significance of relevant contexts in relation to the task assuredness in the connection between those contexts and the genre studied 	
	AO4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> perceptive exploration of connections across literary texts arising out of generic study 	
	AO5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> perceptive and confident engagement with the debate set up in the task 	
Band 4 Coherent/ Thorough 16-20 marks ‘ 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"> logical, thorough and coherent argument in relation to the task where ideas are debated in depth appropriate use of literary critical concepts and terminology; precise and accurate expression 	This band is characterised by coherent and thorough 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 coherent and thorough 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 coherence and accuracy.
	AO2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> thorough understanding of authorial methods in relation to the task thorough engagement with how meanings are shaped by the methods used 	
	AO3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> thorough understanding of the significance of relevant contexts in relation to the task coherence in the connection between those contexts and the genre studied 	
	AO4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> logical and consistent exploration of connections across literary texts arising out of generic study 	
	AO5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> thorough engagement with the debate set up in the task 	

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

Mark	AO	Typical features	How to arrive at mark
<p>Band 1 Largely irrelevant/largely misunderstood/largely inaccurate 1-5 marks</p> <p>‘Largely irrelevant’ work is shown when students write in an unclear way with only occasional reference to what is required by the question.</p> <p>‘Largely misunderstood’ and ‘largely inaccurate’ work is shown when knowledge of the text is insecure, hazy and often wrong.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some vague points in relation to the task and some ideas about task and text(s) • the writing is likely to be unclear and incorrect; if it is accurate the content will be irrelevant • 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 	<p>This band is characterised by work which is largely irrelevant and largely misunderstood and largely inaccurate, 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 irrelevant.</p>
<p>0 marks</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

0 1 *Othello* - William Shakespeare

Explore the significance of the aspects of dramatic tragedy in the following passage in relation to the play as a whole.

You should consider the following in your answer:

- the ways the three characters interact
- the night-time setting
- other relevant aspects of dramatic tragedy

[25 marks]

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

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

The students are given an extract so when working on that they should quote directly to support their ideas. This is a **Closed Book** exam, so while it is expected that students will use quotations when writing about other parts of the play it is also legitimate to make more general reference.

Please refer to section on **Arriving at Marks** on page 3.

AO1 Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression.

With respect to competence in writing:

- quality of argument
- organisation of ideas
- use of appropriate concepts and terminology
- technical accuracy

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

With respect to significance of dramatic methods in relation to the task:

Focus might be on:

- contrasting register of Iago's vulgar speech with more formal language of Roderigo and Brabantio, perhaps indicating social superiority
- differing roles of the characters in this scene: Iago as villain; Roderigo as the 'gull', Brabantio possibly as victim here – which changes later in the play
- Iago's curses ('Zounds') as revealing his contempt for others
- coarse sexual imagery highlighting the central crisis of the play
- pejorative/derogatory language relating to Othello
- dramatic irony of Iago's duplicity revealed to the audience
- concealment of Iago by the darkness mirrors the concealment of his intentions from the others

- compressed time scale of events happening in one night: Brabantio's discovery of Desdemona's absence; meeting at the senate and departure for Cyprus
- structural link to the night-time setting of Othello's first entrance, and to Desdemona's final scene
- night-time setting as a sign of intrusion/disruption to a previously peaceful scene; indicates a shift from order to disorder that begins the descent towards catastrophe
- the night-time setting concealing the visual proof of Desdemona's absence
- Iago's refusal to reveal his identity and his standing in the darkness which is symbolic of his villainy
- the link to the use of darkness in the play, eg Iago's moral darkness; psychological darkness of jealousy
- the link between darkness, hell and Iago made throughout the play
- disturbance of order/domestic setting from the rowdy street below
- use of prose to show Iago's role-playing
- 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 in relation to the task:

Focus might be on:

- class structures in the Renaissance world – elevated status of Brabantio compared to Iago and Roderigo
- Desdemona's subservience to her father, and her rejection of it
- racism shown to Othello through the language
- civil disorder beginning in Venice before the action moves to Cyprus
- etc

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts.

With respect to significance of connections with the tragic genre:

Focus might be on:

- Iago's role as tragic villain
- how the initial portrayal of Othello diminishes his tragic stature/nobility/heroism
- inexorable progress towards tragic catastrophe now Iago has set the course of events
- how Iago's actions may suggest revenge tragedy
- how Othello's tragic fall from grace may be anticipated
- etc

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.

With respect to meanings and interpretations:

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

- responses to Iago as an impressive arch-manipulator and/or as deplorably duplicitous
- Desdemona as an object to be 'circulated' from father to husband – the contentiousness of the idea of arranged marriage and Desdemona's defiant free choice of Othello
- Brabantio as an oppressive or caring father
- the prominence of sexual love in the play
- the destructive power of jealousy in the play
- etc

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

0 2 King Lear - William Shakespeare

Explore the significance of aspects of dramatic tragedy in the following passage in relation to the play as a whole.

You should consider the following in your answer:

- the presentation of Lear
- the contrasts between the three daughters
- the use of stage directions
- other relevant aspects of dramatic tragedy.

[25 marks]

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

Examiners must also remember that because students have read and studied *King Lear* through the lens of **tragedy**, the AOs will necessarily be connected to that genre through the task.

The students are given an extract so when working on that they should quote directly to support their ideas. This is a **Closed Book** exam, so while it is expected that students will use quotations when writing about other parts of the play it is also legitimate to make more general reference.

Please refer to section on **Arriving at Marks** on page 3.

AO1 Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression.

With respect to competence in writing:

- quality of argument
- organisation of ideas
- use of appropriate concepts and terminology
- technical accuracy

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

With respect to significance of dramatic methods in relation to the task:

Focus might be on:

- Lear’s dominance in the extract – he has most of the lines
- regal stature conveyed through language: frequent use of the 1st person plural/the ‘royal we’ – ‘our darker purpose’, ‘we/ Unburdened’; his use of imperatives
- Lear’s first appearance in the play – audience’s view of him is suffused with power and dominance; his public/formal discourse is predicated on the personal father-daughter relationships
- elevated diction of Gonerill and Regan to quantify their love for their father
- how Regan’s speech contains more pointed references to the superiority of her love, indicating animosity/rivalry between them
- the brevity of Cordelia’s lines in contrast to the length of Gonerill’s and Regan’s
- Cordelia’s lines interjected between the speeches of Gonerill and Regan

- the sennet and procession that open the scene, and perhaps the order in which characters enter – indicating the hierarchy; the presence of the ‘coronet’ - indicating the power about to be transferred
- the exit of Gloucester and Edmund indicating a shift in dramatic focus
- the presence of Albany and Cornwall who are on stage but do not speak
- Cordelia’s asides emphasising to the audience the conflict about to emerge and highlighting her difference from her sisters, and perhaps the absurdity of Lear’s exercise.
- 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 in relation to the task:

Focus might be on:

- attitudes towards kingship
- role of the monarch’s daughters
- the instability of a nation after devolution
- role of daughters in political marriages
- impending chaos/social/national upheaval that unfolds
- how stage directions display Lear’s power through music and staging of the opening procession
- the symbolism of the coronet and the map
- etc

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts.

With respect to significance of connections with the tragic genre:

Focus might be on:

- interplay between political power and family relationships (an aspect of tragedy)
- the irony of Lear’s attempt to maintain order which later leads to tragic disorder
- his arrogance/greatness and possible hints at his madness/impulsiveness (flaws that lead to his tragic fall)
- how Cordelia’s asides in the extract set up the tragic train of events
- etc

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.

With respect to meanings and interpretations:

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

- responses to Lear as an oppressive father – students might pick up on seeming obedience and perhaps ‘honour’
- the poignancy of Cordelia’s comparative reticence in speaking about her love
- the extract’s connection to Lear as a broken, vulnerable man at the end of the play
- the frailty of old age
- the interconnection between the loss of power and the loss of love
- a ‘cautionary tale’ about conditional love
- etc

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

Section B

0 3 *Richard II* – William Shakespeare

Explore the view that: 'it is impossible to label Richard as a tragic hero'.

Remember to include in your answer relevant comments on Shakespeare's dramatic methods.

[25 marks]

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

Examiners must also remember that because students have read and studied *Richard II* through the lens of **tragedy**, the AOs will necessarily be connected to that genre through the task.

This is a **Closed Book** exam, so while it is expected that students will use quotations when writing about the play it is also legitimate to make more general reference.

Please refer to section on **Arriving at Marks** on page 3.

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

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

With respect to of dramatic methods in relation to the task:

Focus might be on:

- the presentation of Richard's attitude and behaviour during the duel and banishment of Mowbray and Bolingbroke
- the presentation of his arrogance and impulsiveness in the early scenes
- the transformation he undergoes in Act 4 as he relinquishes power
- how Gaunt's speech about the greatness of England juxtaposes the 'scandal' of Richard's rule
- contrast between scenes at the beginning and end of the play
- structural contrast with Bolingbroke
- the use of soliloquies and speeches, abstract imagery, word play and linguistic devices
- 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 in relation to the task:

Focus might be on:

- the erosion of Richard's power and influence
- the political need for lines of succession
- the fate of England under Richard as monarch and its future under a new king
- etc

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts.

With respect to connections with the tragic genre:

Focus might be on:

- elements of political tragedy – the suffering of England under the 'wasteful king'
- elements of domestic tragedy eg the inclusion of dynastic interest; Gaunt and Bolingbroke, and the Duchess of Gloucester urging Gaunt to avenge her husband's murder
- Richard's flaws – his arrogance and pride
- the role of Bolingbroke as an adversary
- the extent of Richard's 'fall' – from king to prisoner
- Richard's personal suffering after the loss of his regal status
- inexorable progress of the unfolding catastrophe eg the accumulating defections and executions
- anagnorisis – his moral journey and self-recognition
- his becoming noble by the end
- the violence of Richard's end
- etc

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.

With respect to meanings and interpretations:

Students may choose to look at both sides of the debate or just one. It is the quality of the student's response that matters.

Arguments in agreement with the given critical view might consider:

- the display of poor judgement and ineptitude at the start of the play
- the role of Gaunt and Bolingbroke in revealing Richard's shortcomings
- his involvement in Gloucester's murder
- his self-absorption and elaborate behaviour when relinquishing the crown
- his responsibility for England's descent into disorder
- his callousness in response to Gaunt's death
- etc

Arguments that counter the given critical view might consider:

- his heroism in the last two acts
- the sense of loss felt by the audience upon his departure from the action
- the language of the deposition scene
- the nobleness of his renunciation of the crown
- the construct of Richard as a tragic hero by Shakespeare rather than the historical person
- etc

Accept any valid discussion of dramatic methods, any valid interpretations and any valid discussion of contexts.

0 4 *Death of a Salesman* – Arthur Miller

Explore the view that Willy Loman does not have the greatness to be a tragic hero.

Remember to include in your answer relevant comments on Miller’s dramatic methods.

[25 marks]

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

Examiners must also remember that because students have read and studied *Death of a Salesman* through the lens of **tragedy**, the AOs will necessarily be connected to that genre through the task.

This is a **Closed Book** exam, so while it is expected that students will use quotations when writing about the play it is also legitimate to make more general reference.

Please refer to section on **Arriving at Marks** on page 3.

AO1 Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression.

With respect to competence in writing:

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

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

With respect to dramatic methods in relation to the task:

Focus might be on:

- the staging of the house and the use of the ‘forestage’ for city scenes and Willy’s imaginings, creating a sense of ordinariness and ‘smallness’ rather than greatness
- use of stage directions to present Willy as ‘bumbling’ or a ‘failure’ eg talking to himself while Biff and Happy comment on his shortcomings
- dialogue of others to characterise Willy
- the role of ‘The Woman’ to reveal his hypocrisy and weakness
- the use of ‘The Requiem’ to show Willy’s death through the reactions of others
- 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 in relation to the task:

Focus might be on:

- the consumerism of mid-C20th America
- the pressure of social emulation
- his 'low' status at home and work
- the way Willy's self-image is perhaps constructed by external forces, eg by success at work, success with women, being a strong father-figure
- the prevalence of fulfilling the American Dream as a measure of success in the play
- etc

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts.

With respect to connections with the tragic genre:

Focus might be on:

- the play as a 'domestic tragedy'
- familial division (key aspect of domestic tragedy)
- the inexorable progress of economic forces
- his lack of self-understanding (as a tragic flaw)
- his tragic isolation
- his inability to see an alternative to his despair (tragic ending)
- etc

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.

With respect to meanings and interpretations:

Students may choose to look at both sides of the debate or just one. It is the quality of the student's response that matters.

Arguments in agreement with the given critical view might consider:

- the way other characters belittle and eclipse him
- the absence of a final death scene for him
- climactic focus on familial conflict and resolution
- the 'ordinariness' of his life and problems
- the relative 'smallness' or insignificance of his life
- aspects of Willy's life that are managed by Linda, eg his food, what he owes
- the fragility and deceptiveness of his dreams
- etc

Arguments that counter the given critical view might consider:

- Willy's attempt to rise to pressures of capitalism
- the convincing/insightful psychological portrayal of the 'common man'
- the 'greatness' of his ability to endure
- the 'greatness' of his ability to absorb the conflict between his past and the present
- the potential 'greatness' of his decision to commit suicide
- etc

Accept any valid discussion of dramatic methods, any valid interpretations and any valid discussion of contexts.

0 5 **A Streetcar Named Desire – Tennessee Williams**

Explore the view that: ‘it is impossible to sympathise with Blanche Du Bois ‘as a victim’.

Remember to include in your answer relevant comments on Williams’ 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 *A Streetcar Named Desire* through the lens of **tragedy**, the AOs will necessarily be connected to that genre through the task.

This is a **Closed Book** exam, so while it is expected that students will use quotations when writing about the play it is also legitimate to make more general reference.

Please refer to section on **Arriving at Marks** on page 3.

AO1 Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression.

With respect to competence in writing:

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

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

With respect to dramatic methods in relation to the task:

Focus might be on:

- the use of costume and props, eg the telephone, the lampshade to highlight her frivolous behaviour
- the use of music
- the use of stage directions, eg Stanley’s physical violence towards her
- the language with which she addresses Stanley and the boy
- the interweaving of past and present
- the ‘incongruous’ relationship between Blanche and the setting of the Kowalski’s apartment
- use of symbolism eg Streetcar
- 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 in relation to the task:

Focus might be on:

- the role of migrant workers in the American economy and wider society
- the fading of the conservative, out-dated version of 'the South' as a result of the economic development of post-war America
- archaic notions of beauty, gallantry, the 'Southern Belle'
- Blanche as a victim of society that rewards passive women
- etc

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts.

With respect to connections with the tragic genre:

Focus might be on:

- her tragic flaws, her sense of pride and entitlement, her dishonesty about her reasons for staying with the Kowalskis
- her isolation – her inability to find love/companionship
- her tragic fall – the reduction in status from her arrival to her departure at the end
- the tragic disorder that is brought to her world by staying with the Kowalskis
- the violence of Stanley as an adversary
- Stella's betrayal of Blanche by siding with Stanley
- the absence of death for Blanche
- domestic tragedy – the setting of the apartment
- etc

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.

With respect to meanings and interpretations:

Students may choose to look at both sides of the debate or just one. It is the quality of the students's response that matters.

Arguments in agreement with the given critical view might consider:

- her manipulative nature
- the reports of her seeming sexual licentiousness
- her detachment from the reality of the Kowalskis' world
- her self-centredness
- her sense of superiority
- etc

Arguments that counter the given critical view might consider:

- her being a victim of rape
- her being abandoned by Mitch and Stella
- the hardship of Blanche's life at Belle Reve and her struggle to make it succeed
- her disastrous marriage and the suffering it causes her.
- her dependence on others
- the coercion involved in her removal from the apartment at the end of the play
- the harmlessness of her yearning for the past
- her fear of Stanley
- the violence of Stanley towards her
- her being a victim of social change
- etc

Accept any valid discussion of dramatic methods, any valid interpretations and any valid discussion of contexts.