



GCE English Literature

Paper 1: Drama

Section A: Shakespeare

Summer 2017

Exemplars – Commentaries

Questions used in Exemplars

Question 3

"Explore how Shakespeare presents suffering in *Hamlet*. You must relate your discussion to relevant contextual factors and ideas from your critical reading."

Question 5

"Explore the ways in which Shakespeare treats the theme of madness in *King Lear*. You must relate your discussion to relevant contextual factors and ideas from your critical reading."

Question 7

"Explore Shakespeare's presentation of the relationship between Othello and Iago in *Othello*. You must relate your discussion to relevant contextual factors and ideas from your critical reading."

Question 8

"Explore how Shakespeare treats the theme of love in *Othello*. You must relate your discussion to relevant contextual factors and ideas from your critical reading."

Question 15

"Explore the ways in which Shakespeare presents the relationship between Orsino and Olivia in the *Twelfth Night*. You must relate your discussion to relevant contextual factors and ideas from your critical reading."

Ref	Question	Comments	Marks
Script 1	3. HAMLET	A really good Level 4 on both grids. Not Level 5 because it lacks a sophisticated driving argument; it would have benefitted from a greater focus on the question on the last two pages. 'Controlled' and 'consistent' are watch-words.	16 + 10
Script 2	3. HAMLET	Some awareness of the writer at work, but it tends to sit on top of the text, rather than looking at it clearly (e.g. 'Shakespeare uses strong language...', but where does this occur?) References to context are very sweeping and generalized (e.g. the audience would have been strongly religious...) Refers to Mack's point about tragic heroes: this is clear, but it's not relevant to the topic; nor is it explored - so not Level 3. Fulfills Level 2 criteria on both grids.	8 + 4
Script 3	5. KING LEAR	Very strong script across all AOs. Broad range of pertinently embedded references to context and critical arguments. Convincingly argued and accurately expressed. This is an example of a student that is working above level 5.	21 + 14
Script 4	8. OTHELLO	Fairly clear with relevant references to the text. Able to integrate some context (e.g. the 17 th century attitudes to race etc.). Expression is rather melodramatic at times and occasionally verges on narrative. Some limited detail on writer's craft (e.g. Desdemona as a 'jewel' etc). There is one unclear reference to a critical view ('Desdemona and Othello lacked communication') that to a small degree supports the general debate about the way Iago was allowed to destroy the relationship between O and D.	9 + 3
Script 5	7. OTHELLO	This response meets all Level 2 criteria on the AO1-3 grid, but also shows some Level 3 skill. There are parts that lack clarity and other better points on writer's craft (e.g. Shakespeare's use of structure to foreground themes) and context (Othello's insecurity around his race etc). The reference to Rhymer is an unclear, half-digested point, but the response to Leavis is a bit better and there's enough 'clear understanding' to merit Level 3 on the AO5 grid.	10 + 7
Script 6	15. TWELFTH NIGHT	A 'worthy' response: a clear Level 3. Laboured, but clear (e.g. 'the audience at the time would have seen her as improper as she is not ruled by a man...' or 'this could be Shakespeare's way of commenting on society by suggesting that gender and maybe even class norms... gets in the way of love...'). Some clarity around writer's craft (e.g. the 'raven' and 'lamb' analysis). Shows clear understanding of points made by a couple of relevant critics (Shapiro and Hopkins) however, it doesn't really engage with these or move on with the arguments - thus Level 3 for AO5.	11 + 7

Mark Grid – AO1, AO2, AO3

Please refer to the specific marking guidance on page 2 when applying this marking grid.				
Level	Mark	AO1 = bullet point 1	AO2 = bullet point 2	AO3 = bullet point 3
Descriptor (AO1, AO2, AO3)				
	0	No rewardable material.		
Level 1	1–4	Descriptive - Makes little reference to texts with limited organisation of ideas. Limited use of appropriate concepts and terminology with frequent errors and lapses of expression. - Uses a narrative or descriptive approach that shows limited knowledge of texts and how meanings are shaped in texts. Shows a lack of understanding of the writer's craft. - Shows limited awareness of contextual factors.		
Level 2	5–8	General understanding/exploration - Makes general points, identifying some literary techniques with general explanation of effects. Aware of some appropriate concepts and terminology. Organises and expresses ideas with clarity, although still has errors and lapses. - Gives surface readings of texts relating to how meanings are shaped in texts. Shows general understanding by commenting on straightforward elements of the writer's craft. - Has general awareness of the significance and influence of contextual factors. Makes general links between texts and contexts.		
Level 3	9–12	Clear relevant application/exploration - Offers a clear response using relevant textual examples. Relevant use of terminology and concepts. Creates a logical, clear structure with few errors and lapses in expression. - Demonstrates knowledge of how meanings are shaped in texts with consistent analysis. Shows clear understanding of the writer's craft. - Demonstrates a clear exploration of the significance and influence of contextual factors. Develops relevant links between texts and contexts.		
Level 4	13–17	Discriminating controlled application/exploration - Constructs a controlled argument with fluently embedded examples. Discriminating use of concepts and terminology. Controls structures with precise cohesive transitions and carefully chosen language. - Demonstrates discriminating understanding of how meanings are shaped in texts. Analyses, in a controlled way, the nuances and subtleties of the writer's craft. - Provides a discriminating analysis of the significance and influence of contextual factors. Makes detailed links between texts and contexts.		
Level 5	18–21	Critical and evaluative - Presents a critical evaluative argument with sustained textual examples. Evaluates the effects of literary features with sophisticated use of concepts and terminology. Uses sophisticated structure and expression. - Exhibits a critical evaluation of the ways meanings are shaped in texts. Displays a sophisticated understanding of the writer's craft. - Presents a sophisticated evaluation and appreciation of the significance and influence of contextual factors. Makes sophisticated links between texts and contexts.		

Mark Grid – A05

Please refer to the specific marking guidance on page 2 when applying this marking grid.		
Level	Mark	Descriptor (A05)
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–2	Descriptive Shows limited awareness of different interpretations and alternative readings of texts. Limited linking of different interpretations to own response.
Level 2	3–5	General exploration Offers straightforward explanations of different interpretations and alternative readings of texts. Some support of own ideas given with reference to generic different interpretations.
Level 3	6–8	Clear relevant exploration Offers clear understanding of different interpretations and alternative readings of texts. Explores different interpretations in support or contrast to own argument.
Level 4	9–11	Discriminating exploration Produces a developed exploration of different interpretations and alternative readings of texts. Discussion is controlled and offers integrated exploration of different interpretations in development of own critical position.
Level 5	12–14	Critical and evaluative Applies a sustained evaluation of different interpretations and alternative readings of texts. This is supported by sophisticated use of application of alternative interpretations to illuminate own critical position.