

AS and A Level English Literature



EXEMPLAR RESPONSES

A level paper 1 (Drama) Section B – ‘other’ drama

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About this exemplar pack

This pack has been produced to support English Literature teachers delivering the new GCE English Literature specification (first assessment summer 2017).

The pack contains exemplar student responses to GCE A level English Literature paper 1 (Section B – Other drama). It shows real student responses (whether typed or handwritten) to the questions taken from the sample assessment materials.

For schools delivering a co-taught AS and A level course, the ‘other’ drama text will be covered in the first year, as it is assessed at AS level, as well as A level. For schools teaching a linear 2 year A level only, the course content can be taught in any order. Please see the example [course planners](#) for more support on delivering the course content.

The A level drama questions address 3 Assessment Objects: AO1, AO2, AO3. The AS level question addresses 4 Assessment Objectives: AO1, AO2, AO3 and AO5.

The examples in the pack show response to the A level style questions.

For differences in the question style between AS and A level, please see the respective [sample assessment materials](#).

Students must:	
AO1	Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression
AO2	Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts
AO3	Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received
AO4	Explore connections across literary texts
AO5	Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations
Total	

Following each question you will find the mark scheme for the band that the student has achieved, with accompanying examiner comments on how the marks have been awarded, and any ways in which the response might have been improved.

Mark scheme for A level paper 1, Section B

	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1-5	<p>Descriptive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	6-10	<p>General understanding/exploration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	11-15	<p>Clear relevant application/exploration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	16-20	<p>Discriminating controlled application/exploration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	21-25	<p>Critical and evaluative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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.

EXEMPLAR RESPONSE A

Dr Faustus

Explore Marlowe's presentation of Faustus as a character who gets what he deserves. You must relate your discussion to relevant contextual factors.

In Christopher Marlowe's 'Dr Faustus' the consequences of Faustus's actions is one key theme of the play. The start of the play is very centred on Faustus' wants and arrogance. As the play progresses Faustus' actions lead to serious consequences for him as he 'gets what he deserves'. However it becomes harder to think badly of Faustus as he becomes a comic and pitiful character.

Faustus just gets what he deserves when he asks Mephistophilis for a wife, instead getting a ~~wife~~ 'hot whore'. Faustus cannot be granted a wife as marriage is in the eyes of god. Faustus has purposefully sinned and gone against God's will. A contemporary audience to 'Dr Faustus' would have agreed strongly with this punishment. Marriage was viewed as a very religious ceremony then. Today's audience may have different views on marriage due to the higher number of atheists and humanists.

Towards the end of the play in scene 11 we see another case of Faustus not getting what he bargained for, instead, getting what he deserves. He must serve the duke and duchess grapes. This is ironic as Faustus had wanted to be on a position above the Duke but now he was just serving him. Faustus says, 'I humbly thank your grace'. This is quite groveling and it also demeans Faustus very much, he has to thank the Duke for ~~rewarding~~ rewarding his sinning and he

has to address the duke as 'your grace'. Further emphasising Faustus' lonely position.

In many ways Faustus truly gets what he deserves. He is warned many times that he is taking the wrong path, by Mephistophilus 'O Faustus, leave these miserable demands! However he ignores them, despite being given the chance to escape he does not. This gives Faustus more arrogance, making both a modern and contemporary audience a reason ~~to~~ to dislike his character.

A ~~contemporary~~ contemporary audience of 'Dr Faustus' would feel strongly against Faustus' actions and character. Being a very religious society Faustus's many sins would have been horrific to them and his turn away from god seen as despicable. They would have only believed that Faustus 'got what he deserved' as his actions were seen as sinful or mean. Another belief that a contemporary audience would have held was in 'The Great Chain of Being'. This was one belief that ~~that~~ everything had its place in one 'chain'. ~~with~~ with the angels and God at the top. Faustus' wish ~~of~~ of 'power of honour and omnipotence' ~~of~~ rivals the power of the monarch and that of God. The loyal contemporaries would have been strongly against Faustus' wishes. His desire to be at the top of the 'chain' ~~of~~ would go against what the audience believed. Therefore the audience would believe that Faustus truly got what he deserved.

A modern day audience may feel more sympathetic

towards Faustus as he shows many moments of wanting to repent and regretting his decisions. At the end of the ~~theatre~~ play Faustus has a moment of anagnorisis when he realises he has himself to blame, ‘Curse thy self’. He tries to repent but it is too late. However he shows signs of being truly sorry. This though could be interpreted in different ways, he may be truly sorry or just trying to avoid the consequences. If Faustus had been allowed to heaven by God then would he have gone the same way as Lucifer? Therefore an audience can interpret Dr Faustus in many different ways, whether they are a modern or ~~theatre~~ contemporary audience.

In Marlowe’s ‘Dr Faustus’, the character Faustus ~~theatre~~ may get what he deserves. However, what he deserves is merely a matter of personal opinion. The majority of a contemporary audience would be pleased with Faustus’ outcome and his fate. A modern audience may be more sympathetic due to different religious views. The interpretation of one play ~~can~~ can differ in individuals as Marlowe presents Faustus as a very ambiguous and complex character.

Marker’s comments

Clear argument. Explores how context influences the writer’s craft. Some detailed reference to the text. Sound treatment of the ‘comic’ scenes.

Level 3 Mark 14

Level 3	11-15	Clear relevant application/exploration
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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.

EXEMPLAR RESPONSE B

Dr Faustus

Dr Faustus was written by Christopher Marlow in the sixteenth century, when religion played an important part in people's lives. Faustus trades his soul to the devil in order to ~~the~~ perform black magic; this decision was carried out despite the numerous ~~warnings~~ he received. Many people would agree that the ~~this~~ protagonist ~~deserves~~ got what he deserved.

Faustus is portrayed as an extremely hubris character from the start where the ~~devil~~ good and evil angel fight over him, 'How am I glutted with conceit of this!' so he believes he already has all the power and the angels are only ~~concerned~~ trying to convince him what to do with it. It links to the concept of humanism, where Faustus believes that he is greater than God. At the time the play was written, society was very religious so the original audience would have definitely believed Faustus got what he deserved, as he thought he was greatest which would have been seen as sinful.

Faustus is also presented as a foolish character, as he ignored the warnings he received about selling his soul to the devil. One was from ~~Mephisto~~ Mephistopheles, the devil. "I came now ~~but~~ hither of mine own accord", showing that although he ~~is~~ is a servant for Lucifer, he still gives Faustus a warning, perhaps as he knows the consequences. For the sixteenth century audience, this would have been frustrating because it is a warning from a devil, who if anything, ~~we~~ should be trying to convince Faustus to sell his soul, so it would seem foolish not to listen to him.

However it could also be perceived through reverse psychology, so by ~~steps~~ ^{this} Mephistopheles telling Faustus not to sign, could actually be used as a method to get him to do so, and therefore the audience may feel some sympathy and believe didn't deserve what he got.

Another warning Faustus got was when he was about to sign the contract in blood, and his blood clotted, "My blood congeals and I can write no more". This should have been a clear message to take caution when ~~outreaching~~ making this decision, as no one is telling him not to sign, but his own body. Faustus also showed hubristic behaviour just before he signed where he said, 'View here the blood that trickles from my arm', which shows his own confidence in his decision. Here, it is evident that Faustus got what he deserved as he was told by his own body, and also had the chance to repent, but didn't because of his arrogance.

Faustus showed a sense of rebellion before he signed his soul away, mainly against religion, where he spoke in Latin, 'Si peccasse negamus, fallimur, et nulla est in nobis veritas'. This would have been seen as a mass Catholic intrusion, as Britain at the time the play was written, was a Protestant country. The sixteenth century audience would have felt frightened by this because they were more religious, so they may have actually believed Faustus was going to summon a devil. Therefore they would have believed Faustus deserved the consequences of his action.

By the end of the play, Faustus comes to a point of realisation about what consequences his actions, have caused. The final scene includes desperate dialogue, "Faustus must be damned". This anagnorisis may make the modern day audience feel sorry for Faustus, as he had the potential to become successful but chose not to take it. Faustus also cries for Christ to come and save him, but by that time it was too late, so he ended up crying out for Lucifer, "O spare me Lucifer". This also shows Faustus' desperation as he has no control of his body. At this point the sixteenth century audience would have experienced catharsis as they got to see Faustus get sent to hell, and that they would have believed Faustus got what he deserved.

In my opinion, I believe Faustus deserved the consequences of his actions as he was offered numerous warnings which he chose not to take. A key reason for this was his hubris

behaviour, as he never doubted himself thought he was too great to be doubted. Although he was offered given time to repent, he also chose not to even if he did sense doubt. The audiences are able to learn from Faustus' mistakes in this morality play.

Marker's comments

This response has some issues with expression. Some narrative recount but the discussion of Catholicism is good. Clear and relevant discussion. Uses specific textual examples. Makes clear links to context.

Level 3 Mark 11

Level 3	11-15	Clear relevant application/exploration
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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.

EXEMPLAR RESPONSE C

Dr Faustus

The play ‘Dr Faustus’, written by Christopher Marlowe during the 16th century, is a play regarding morality, religion and selfishness, which follows the hubristic protagonist, Dr Faustus, into his regretful descent into hell.

Faustus can be seen as a character who wholly gets what he deserves, despite his painful moment of anagnosis at the end of the play. Yet this view is not always shared between various audiences.

The opening prologue of the play immediately alienates the audience from Faustus, describing him as ‘swollen with cunning’. The reference to Icarus with ‘waken wings’ foreshadows how he will fall to a ‘demiish excuse’ of ‘cursed necromancy’ (black magic).

The lengthy soliloquy by Faustus in Scene one shows how he is so full of self-importance that neither law nor medicine are good enough for him. He declares, ‘a sound magician is a noughty god’, which demonstrates his hubristic nature as he aims to be that.

This unattractive nature is further reinforced with Faustus proclaiming, ‘How am I glutted with conceit of this!'

This exclamatory response to the Evil Angel highlights how overful he is with pride.

This early depiction of the protagonist completely alienates the audience from him, who wait eagerly to see his ‘overthrow’.

Faustus trades his soul with Lucifer in scene 5 of the play, and so begins the spiral of descent into ~~near~~ hell, which the audience have been anticipating since the prologue. It is also here that we see Faustus' fear for the first time, when his blood congeals whilst with Mephistophilis: 'Is it unwilling I should write this bill?' In trading his soul, Faustus also trades his freedom to marry and love by rejecting Christianity. He asks Mephistophilis for a wife, describing himself as 'wanton and lascivious', portraying his hubris and conceit. However, Faustus can only have 'courtesans', described as 'not whores', and not a wife. Marriage was, in the 16th century, a contract with God as the witness, described by Mephistophilis: "marriage is but a ceremonial toy". Faustus also has an idealized love for Helen of Troy, but like Alexander and his paramour in scene 9 she is presumably just a spirit and perhaps even a succubus. This represents how Faustus has been dramatically short-changed by his deal, and will not become 'Emperor of the world' as he previously imagined. Throughout these moments in the play, the audience sees how Faustus is starting to regret his desiderium decision.

Religion is also a prominent theme that influenced the play and depicted how modern or contemporary audiences

would have felt about Faustus getting what he deserved. Faustus rejects his contract with God and trades his soul to the devil which he actively seeks himself as a result of his hubristic nature previously demonstrated. When this play was written it was a time when a strong and pure relationship with God was one of the most significant moral complexities. To deny God at a time when the whole population was devoutly Christian was seen as the ultimate sin. The contemporary audience would have been dramatically affected by this and would have therefore believed that his future in hell was wholly deserved, both due to both his nature and his actions.

Dr Faustus focuses on religion and moral complexities which were of great importance to the contemporary audience. Therefore, they would have strongly believed that he got what he deserved. However, the modern audience would not have agreed with this ~~more~~^{as} strongly. They may have been able to sympathise more with Faustus and accept his dramatic moment of anagnorisis at the end when Faustus forcefully tries to repent and thus the modern audience would come to understand that, despite his unattractive nature, he did not deserve what he received.

Marker’s comments

Controlled argument for the most part. Analyses writer’s craft. Makes discriminating points. Often evaluative. Sustained reference to the text. Some repetition. Needs to analyse dramatic method.

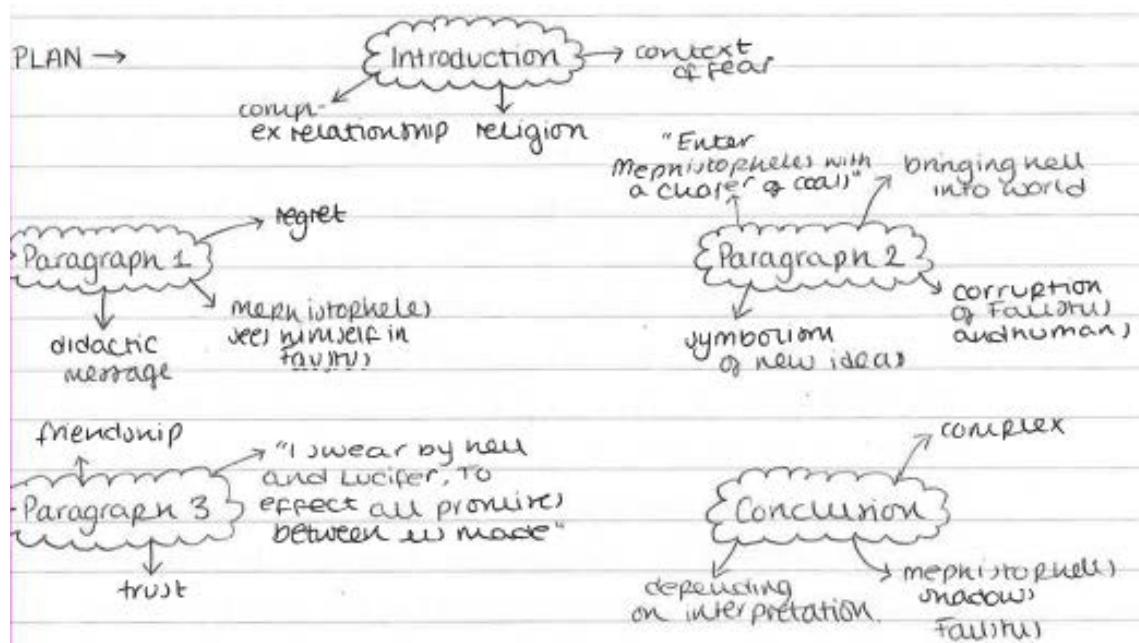
Level 4 Mark 18

Level 4	16-20	Discriminating controlled application/exploration
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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.

EXEMPLAR RESPONSE D

Dr Faustus

Explore the ways in which Marlowe presents the relationship between Faustus and Mephistopheles. You must relate your discussion to relevant contextual factors.



The relationship between Faustus and Mephistophilis is presented in many different ways throughout the play by Christopher Marlowe. Traditionally, and in the context of the production of the play, one would imagine a character that is essentially a servant/slave to the devil to be portrayed as pure evil and out to ruin the lives of other characters. Despite the role of Mephistophilis, in some parts of the play his relationship with Faustus is portrayed as trustworthy (almost too trusting some might argue). There are also various parallels drawn between the two characters, and we almost see how Faustus could become like Mephistophilis in the future.

One interpretation of the relationship between these characters is that Mephistophilis is corrupting Faustus and darkening his life significantly. "Enter Mephistophilis with a cuifer or coals" is symbolic of how Mephistophilis is bring-

ing all hell and devil into the real world. At this point, he is trying to ensure that Faustus is able to sign away his soul by using ~~parts~~^{elements} of hell to speed up the process. When this play was produced, organised religion was a huge part of culture. Fear was instilled in people by the church, and the necromantic behaviour of Faustus would have been frightening to an audience at this time anyway. The relationship probably would have then been seen as one-sided, as if Faustus was just being used by Mephistopheili to get what he wanted.

However, there are parts of the play where the relationship seems more friendly and trusting. “I swear by hell and Lucifer to effect all promise between us made”, suggests that although Mephistopheili has aided Faustus to condemn himself to an eternity in hell, at least he is being completely honest and open with Faustus. Almost, a friendship is built up between the characters and as they travel around the world, this friendship can actually be seen as comic. The use of irony here is evident, as it seems strange and funny to the audience that a man can be friends with the devil. It can also be argued that Faustus attaches himself to Mephistopheili more and more as the play progresses and he becomes increasingly aware of his mistake. He cannot marry, because marriage is a sacrament and he has denounced God, so he can only fulfill his need for human interaction with a creature who is arguably as far from ‘human’ as possible. A modern audience might feel sympathetic towards Faustus for this, but an Elizabethan audience (due to their strength of religious belief) wouldn’t be as understanding to his character and in fact would probably view his improving relationship with Mephistopheili as a symbol of his slow and painful journey towards hell.

Another way that this relationship is presented in the play is that Mephistopheles seems to see himself as Faustus and he recognises the similarities between them. For example when Faustus asks Mephistopheles "where are you damned?" and Mephistopheles replies "In hell", he can be seen as attempting to warn Faustus about signing away his soul. This could be because he doesn't want Faustus (who at this point is still quite youthful) to end up like him, "a servant to great Lucifer". Mephistopheles might even use his warning to Faustus as a cathartic experience, trying to rid himself of guilt. Similarly, in Mephistopheles' last line of the play "Fool that will laugh on earth, must weep in hell", it can be argued that Mephistopheles is kind of taking glee in the idea that Faustus has made the same 'mistake' as he has. We see Mephistopheles return to the stereotype of his character at this point in the play. Whilst knowing Faustus, he managed to regain some of his humanity, but in the end, their relationship comes full circle, and he returns to his role as corrupter and in a sense, the bringer of terrible news to the world, straight from hell and Lucifer himself.

My final, considered judgement on the relationship between Faustus and Mephistopheles is that their friendship or acquaintance goes around in a circle. As the play begins, Mephistopheles appears as a corruptive character who just wants to ruin Faustus' life in order to feel better about his own bad judgement. However, as the narrative plot progresses we see that Faustus and Mephistopheles become reliant on each other as companions, developing their friendship and challenging the probably preconceived opinions of the character by

an Elizabethan audience. & However, near the end of the play, Mephistophilis realises his place as a servant to Lucifer and remains in the negative view of Elizabethan audience members with strong religious conviction).

Marker's comments

A clear and controlled argument but the characters are not seen as literary constructs. Nice points about the cyclical relationship. Not much sense of the play as a tragedy.

Level 4 Mark 19

Level 4	16-20	Discriminating controlled application/exploration <ul style="list-style-type: none">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.
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EXEMPLAR RESPONSE E

Dr Faustus

Explore Marlowe’s presentation of Faustus as a character who gets what he deserves. You must relate your discussion to relevant contextual factors.

The idea that Faustus is a ‘man who gets what he deserves’ is a simplistic reading of a far more complicated play. The morality of Marlowe’s ‘Dr Faustus’ is complex because although he does suggest at times that Faustus is the evil character that he is expected to be, he also presents him as sympathetic character and a victim. He is manipulated by the evils around him, and is a victim of his society. Therefore, Marlowe is not writing a play simply about a ‘man who gets what he deserves’, he is delving into human nature and what it means to be evil.

An initial reading of Dr Faustus would be that it is a simple morality play that conforms to the traditions of this genre. Because Marlowe was working both within the genre of the gothic and morality play, there are elements of these simple moral lessons that an Elizabethan audience would have certainly picked out. The most prevalent example of this is the use of the Good and Evil Angels. This is within the morality play tradition; they are the personification of dogmatic morals. The Good Angel teaches that if Faustus does not repent, he will “feel God’s heavy wrath upon thy head”, whereas the Evil Angel tempts him with power: “be thou on earth as Jove is in the sky.” These morals would be easily identifiable to an Elizabethan audience as the choice between devotion and sin; a choice they had been taught to accept their whole lives. That the Evil Angel says Faustus will be “as Jove is in the sky” would have been particularly shocking. The fact that he wants to match the power of God would have been considered one of the most serious breaches of Elizabethan moral codes (the great chain of being), as they had been taught by the Church from a young age that God is omnipotent and we are small and insignificant. Thus Marlowe’s use of this shocking deviation from social norms would suggest that the morals of the play are simple: the audience is encouraged to feel distain towards Faustus for choosing the wrong side, and rejoice at his death. Therefore, they believe that he ‘gets what he deserves’.

Another argument that could be used to support the notion that Faustus ‘gets what he deserves’ is that he is presented as a fool who ignores the clear warnings against his sinful deviance. This implies he gets what he deserves because he brings it upon himself. Marlowe clearly shows Faustus not heeding the warnings against his sinful actions when he encounters Mephistopheles, who warns him that he suffers “ten thousand hells in being deprived of everlasting bliss.” This helpful advice is not what you’d expect from a devil, as he should be tempting Faustus, but here, he is actively describing to him the pains of hell and what he goes through to warn Faustus against selling his soul. After a conversation about the horrors of hell, Marlowe brings Faustus’s naivety to the fore by having him ignore Mephistopheles’ warnings: “had I as many souls as there be stars, I’d give them all for Mephistopheles”. Marlowe’s use of irony here is undoubtedly presenting Faustus as a fool, as he romanticises the act of selling

his soul by using the hyperbolical statement of “as many souls as there be stars”, a technique often used in love poems, emphasising his naivety and giddiness. The argument would be that he ‘gets what he deserves’ as he is not tempted into sin, he is actively pushing himself into it. It could be suggested that it is self-destruction that leads Faustus to his demise and he ‘gets what he deserves’ because he ignorance is instrumental in his damnation.

Although it is likely that an Elizabethan audience would not have been able to see past the simple moral messages because of their highly religious society, a modern audience can take a more considered approach to Marlowe’s presentation of Faustus. As a 21st Century audience, we are able also to see him as a victim and as manipulated by the world around him. That he is a villainous character who ‘gets what he deserves’ is too simplistic because he does make several attempts throughout the play to repent against magic and turn to God. On one such occasion, Marlowe makes Faustus’s desperation to repent clear: “Ah, Christ, my saviour! Seek to save Faustus’s soul!” but he is interrupted by “Lucifer”. This interruption is important, because it shows the audience that Faustus does make the attempt to repent as he should, but these attempts are disrupted by truly evil and terrifying things. In the Elizabethan era, the staging of “Enter Lucifer” would have probably been shocking and horrifying. Even today, in the Globe’s recent production of ‘Dr Faustus’, Lucifer’s costume had decrepit wings that spanned the whole stage. Marlowe is undoubtedly implying that Faustus is not an intrinsically evil man. He tried to turn to God, but is interrupted by a terrifying event that forces him to be complicit out of fear. He does not ‘get what he deserves’ because he is a victim of the evil that manipulates him through threat and intimidation.

Marlowe makes Faustus a complex character by highlighting his role as a victim and not a simple, evil character as he would be if Marlowe had intend the play to be about a ‘man who gets what he deserves’. Our sympathy is particularly encouraged in the final scene, when Faustus is dragged to hell. In an act of desperation, he cries out: “I’ll burn my books!” This is a poignant moment because “books” are the reason for his grand aspirations. As we find out in the Prologue “his parents [were] base of stock”. Therefore, him offering to “burn” his books is harrowing because it shows the true extent of his distress; he is willing to give up the most important thing to him personally and to his livelihood in a desperate attempt to save himself. This is a clear invitation to the audience to sympathise with a character who should be presented as evil. Marlowe is emphasising the ‘tragedy’ in ‘The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus.’ He is making Faustus’s death appear like a sad loss, rather than the triumph it would be if all he was trying to achieve was to show that Faustus ‘gets what he deserves’.

On a more subtle level, Marlowe implies that Faustus does not ‘get what he deserves’ because he is not the one who orchestrates his downfall. In the Prologue, Marlowe suggests that Faustus was victim to a machination against him by comparing him to Icarus: “melting heavens conspired his overthrow”. Of

course, like Icarus, Faustus is not blameless in his downfall, but that Marlowe used the word “conspired” corroborates the notion that he intended to suggest that those in “heaven” somehow wanted Faustus to fall, that they “conspired his overthrow” by not helping him renounce sin and turn back to God. This view is strengthened by the fact that God is only character who is only ever mentioned and never appears on stage. It could be argued that this absence is what led Faustus to this downfall, as he did attempt to repent several times, and none of these times did God help to guide him. Marlowe seems to be questioning the idea of a benevolent God and this type of questioning of religious orthodoxy was beginning to emerge at the time when this play was produced.

It is very clear that Marlowe did not intend his play to simply be about a ‘man who gets what he deserves’. Although he does include elements of the morality play, and characterises Faustus as a fool, a more convincing interpretation is that Marlowe uses Faustus’s demise to question the notion of a benevolent God and to highlight the ease with which you can fall from his favour. This can be seen in his presentation of Faustus as a victim being manipulated by evil, and in his sympathetic moments as an everyman.

Marker’s comments:

A sophisticated argument, confidently expressed. Evaluates genre features and the writer’s methods of characterisation. Makes intelligent links between text and context. Sophisticated appreciation of the play’s contexts.

Level 5 Mark 25

Level 5	21–25	Critical and evaluative
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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.

EXEMPLAR RESPONSE F

A Streetcar Named Desire

Explore Williams's presentation of desire in A Streetcar Named Desire. You must relate your discussion to relevant contextual factors.

Desire is a crucial theme in the play and can been seen as an allegory of Blanche du Bois's life. Even Blanche's name is symbolic of this as the colour white symbolises purity and innocence suggesting that Blanche is an innocent person, and du Bois suggests 'wood' which represents something solid and dependable. Throughout the play, however, it becomes evident that this is not true; wood is also associated with the jungle, symbolising Blanche's disturbing past and her troubled desires.

Blanche is unable to come to terms with her desire, and is deeply ashamed by this. Having taken care of the family, while Stella ran off for a new life, Blanche is jealous of Stella's choice: she seems obsessed with Stella sleeping with her "Polack." Stella has built a life around her sexual relationship with Stanley, which stimulates Blanches' desires, with an element of sexual jealousy but also of a Southern aristocrat's contempt for a vulgar immigrant, saying "oh, I guess he's just not the type that goes for jasmine perfume". Blanche is lonely and desires Stella's open attraction for Stanley, but is fragile and disturbed because jealousy is an extremely destructive emotion. She also flirts with Stanley which is disturbing as she seems desperate for love, or to be seen as desirable, saying "Would you think it possible that I was once considered to be attractive?... I was fishing for a compliment, Stanley."

In scene two the destructive impact of desire is raised when Blanche speaks about "Belle Reve". Blanche had lost Belle Reve due to her "pitiful salary," but the plantation was lost, Blanche believes, by her forefathers' promiscuity "our improvident grandfathers and father and uncles and brothers exchanged the land for their epic fornications." Losing Belle Reve, Blanche lost her parents, friends and family yet she "stayed in Belle Reve and tried to hold it together" unlike Stella who ran away and married Stanley. So, Blanche's family home was destroyed by her ancestor's desires, and her sister did not stay to save the family home, as she was pursuing her own desires "I let the place go? Where were you! In bed with your Polack!"

Blanche was left to deal with the consequences of other people's desires, and has to repress her own and be alone as she says "I,I,I took the blows in my face and my body!, All those deaths! The long parade to the graveyard!" She effectively repeats "I" several times, to create a frenzied and hysterical impression, and also to emphasise that she had to cope on her own. In her dialogue with Stella, she constructs very short sentences and says "I saw! Saw! Saw!" This increases the hysterical, frantic atmosphere and undoubtedly suggests that Blanche is unstable and repressed. She is determined to explain herself. She repeats herself several times which makes the reader question her mental state. The effect of the repetition is to create emphasis on her fragility and indicate desperation. Blanche has evidently been traumatized by these

events and is resentful as shown when she becomes defensive and immediately assumes that Stella is “accusing” her.

“Belle Reve” is significant because its name can be defined as a beautiful dream. This could reflect Blanche’s desires to lead a luxurious life from the past. Belle Reve and Blanche could be seen to symbolize the Old South. Blanche symbolizes the Old South since she grew up in a southern mansion and has older values whilst Belle Reve is a plantation; it’s associated with old-fashioned southern ideals such as money and inheritance. However New Orleans is a poor neighbourhood. Blanche has difficulty adjusting to Stella’s small house because she’s used to

having money and living luxuriously. She comes from an upper-class background, and has the typical characteristics of people of high social standing, but she is intolerant and prejudiced, desiring a lifestyle which no longer exists which makes her insecure about her status and her appearance. Stella tells Stanley “admire her dress and tell her she’s looking wonderful. That’s important with Blanche. Her little weakness!” Stella knows how much Blanche desires admiration.

In contrast to the Old South, the new South is tolerant but poorer. Stanley represents this and he powerfully rejects Blanche’s feeling of superiority “But what I am is a one hundred percent American, born and raised in the greatest country on earth and proud as hell of it, so don’t ever call me a Polack.” Stanley represents modernity and the new South and although not wealthy, is an independent and hardworking individual. In spite of this, Stanley is very suspicious of Blanche’s claims to have no money, drawing attention to her clothes and jewellery as under the “Napoleonic code” Stella’s property would also be Stanley’s. This shows that he also desires wealth.

In the beginning of the play Blanche is described as a “moth” who “must avoid a strong light.” This is an interesting metaphor, as moths symbolize fragility. Moths are drawn to light the way Blanche is desperately drawn from it. She is reluctant to go near light as people would reject her due to her age and feeling physically undesirable. She is unstable and prone to complete disintegration and indeed potentially being damaged, just as moths can be damaged beyond repair. Blanche dresses “in a white suit with a fluffy bodice” and has regular baths which help calm her “nerves”. White is a significant colour because it symbolizes purity, like Blanches name. Perhaps her baths and clothes represent her desire to cleanse herself from her unpleasant history as she is constantly lying to hide her shameful past. Stanley finds out that “they kicked her out” of the “high school” as she had an affair with “a seventeen year old boy.” Blanche is clearly ashamed of her past yet her affair with a young man and her fears of being rejected for her ageing looks represents her desire for youth.

Blanche’s drinking, wild behavior and one night stands contributed to her inability to cope with the financial state of Belle Reve and hence she has been undone by the same inappropriate sexual desires as her ancestors. Blanche tries to hide her past and her drinking problem as she still desires the privileges of being part of the Southern elite classes. When offered a shot by Stanley she declines as she “rarely touches” it. However her alcohol problem also shows her fragility since she avoids reality, preferring to live in her own imagination reaching into this escape through drink.

Ultimately, desire contributes to her downfall since she's constantly deluded and creating fantasies about her own desirability, which leads to the climax of the play in which Blanche pretends to retract her desire for Stanley by saying "But I have been foolish--casting my pearls before swine!" this enrages Stanley leading him to first destroy all of her delusions, and then rape her. This is presented as inevitable, as the final act of the path that Blanche and Stanley have been on from the beginning as Stanley says "we've had this date with each other from the beginning."

In conclusion desire is most clearly presented through the character of Blanche, who represents an inability to come to terms with desires, both in the past and in the present, and how this leads to inevitable destruction.

Marker’s comments:

Shows good understanding of the writer’s craft. Sophisticated evaluation of context. Well-sustained argument with lots of textual support. Could have had a wider range of reference than these two characters.

Level 5 Mark 22

Level 5	21-25	Critical and evaluative
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.

EXEMPLAR RESPONSE G

A Streetcar Named Desire

Explore Williams's presentation of illusion and reality in A Streetcar Named Desire. You must relate your discussion to relevant contextual factors.

Williams presents illusion and reality through the characters of Blanche and Stanley. Whilst Blanche represents illusion, and ultimately insanity, Stanley represents the hardness and brutality of reality.

With her clothes, jewels and furs, Blanche is presented as holding on to the illusion of an illustrious past, in spite of the fact that Belle Reve, the family plantation has been lost. Blanche is presented as a woman for whom appearance is reality "a woman's charm is fifty percent illusion" and who requires constant complimenting and praise in order to retain her sense of self-worth "I was fishing for a compliment Stanley." Blanche does not allow the reality of her situation to come in, but when it does, she is overcome and quickly turns to hysteria and jealous insults, such as when she is explaining the reasons for the loss of Belle Reve to Stella "Sit there and stare at me, thinking I let the place go! I let the place go? Where were you! In bed with your Polack!"

Unlike Blanche, Williams constructs Stanley as speaking bluntly and directly, getting straight to the point. Whilst Blanche talks in extended speeches, Stanley is curt. When Stella explains that Belle Reve is lost, Stanley immediately wants proof and is suspicious of Blanche's story: "She didn't show you no papers, no deed of sale or nothing like that, huh?" It can be considered that in this contrasting presentation, Williams is representing the new south through the character of Stanley, and the old south through the character of Blanche. Blanche has difficulty adjusting to Stella's small house because she's used to having money and living luxuriously, she is "ashamed" of Stella's house. She comes from an upper-class background, and has the characteristics of people of high social standing. Stanley represents modernity and the new South. Stanley, although not wealthy, is an independent and hardworking individual. Stanley is a manual worker, and is often shown in work clothes, sweaty or dirty from his physical labour, whereas Blanche is a former English teacher, with her shaking and needs to sit down and rest, and her desire to be attractive, even to Stanley who she supposedly does not like. Stanley responds to Blanche's fishing for a compliment by saying: "I don't go in for that stuff." The old south is over, apart from in fantasies of the past, so reality has triumphed over illusion, as Stanley and his world will triumph over Blanche.

Throughout A Streetcar named Desire, Blanche is presented as retreating into a fantasy world due to her increasing sense of desperation. Williams presents this in a number of ways, with the dramatic device of the "train approaching" at the culmination of Scene 4 being particularly powerful. The noise of the train, concealing the presence of Stanley, is symbolic of Blanche's fragile and blinkered mental state, which is further demonstrated in Blanche's long, pleading speech for Stella to not "hang back with the brutes." During this speech, Williams uses extended sentences, with scripted pauses and false starts to express Blanche's contempt for Stanley and sense of rushing to express her jumble of thoughts regarding him "There's even something – sub-human – something not quite to the stage of humanity yet!" Williams uses the semantic fields of wild animals to convey Blanche's disgust for Stanley "grunting", "gnawing" "swilling"

“hulking.” The effect of the rushed words and visceral imagery is to make Blanche appear over-wrought and unstable as she continuously criticizes Stanley, showing her disgust for him and what he represents. Her speech ends with the passing of a second train, which disguises Stanley’s arrival. The sounds off the rushing, clanging trains are symbolic of Blanche’s descent into madness and her troubled mind, and how this leaves her open to Stanley’s physical and symbolic threat, as he hides behind her mental fragility. This dramatic device also represents how Williams blurs the lines between the outside and the inside within this play, with sounds from outside having an influence within the small apartment such as street noise, and music such as blues piano, trumpets and drums, which symbolize the movement of the new ideas and ways of life into homes, as the sounds of jazz and urban life travel through the house’s walls.

Towards the end of the play, Blanche’s illusions start to unwind. She is accused of being a liar by Mitch, who no longer wants to marry her, she recounts the story Shep Huntleigh, who gives the appearance of an archetypal southern gentleman, and lies to Stanley about a telegram from a rich admirer. She is unable to maintain the illusions though and Stanley tears them apart: “There isn’t a goddam thing but imagination!” Stanley represents the harshness of reality; his harsh physical world destroys Blanche’s fantasy and ultimately takes power over her completely through raping her. This creates the final retreat into total fantasy for Blanche, who still maintains the illusion of waiting for Shep Huntleigh, with both Stella and Eunice humouring her, and pandering to her delusions, as she is now beyond fantasy and into insanity: “You look wonderful, Blanche. Don’t she look wonderful?”

In conclusion the illusion is presented through the character of Blanche who retreats into a fantasy world to cope with reality. In the end, this leads to insanity, but Williams’ presents this as a relief for Blanche, perhaps because the reality, as represented by Stanley, is too brutal and hard.

Marker’s comments

The response demonstrates clear understanding of the play but it is not focused clearly on the question. There is some detailed exploration of the writer’s craft and links are developed to contexts – but comments are not always relevant.

Level 3 Mark 13

Level 3	11–15	Clear relevant application/exploration
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.

