



Pearson

International Advanced Level English Literature

Unit 2 WET02

Drama

**Examiner commentaries on exemplar
responses**

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International Advanced Level English Literature

Unit 2 WET02: Drama

Examiner commentaries on Exemplar responses

This set of exemplar responses with examiner commentaries for Unit 2, Drama, has been produced to support teachers teaching and students learning the International Advanced Level English Literature specification.

This pack includes examiner commentaries on exemplar scripts, exemplar scripts and Assessment Objectives for ease of reference.

The scripts selected exemplify performance for this component in the June 2016 examination.

This document should be used alongside other IAL English Literature teaching and learning materials available on the website [here](#)

Examiner reports on performance in this paper are located on the website [here](#)
Mark Scheme for Unit 2 WET02 is [here](#)

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Exemplar 1

Question: Othello – William Shakespeare

'The play depicts the terrible consequences of unrestrained passion.'

In the light of this statement, explore the presentation of different types of passion in the play. In your answer, you must consider relevant contextual factors.

(Total for Question 9 = 30 marks)

Exemplar answer:

Shakespeare used Cinthio's "Gli Hecatombi" as a primary source in weaving a tale of the lover between a black general and Venetian lady in a time of double talk and treachery where an "ensign... cloaked with proud and valorous speech" used the purity of love to wreak havoc on the lives of all involved. Elizabethans believed the absence of reason to be the main reason behind the Adamic fall; Adam let his love for Eve overrule his better judgement and obedience to God. When passion dominates reason the consequences are dire and such is the case in "Othello".

Othello's unrestrained passion is ultimately what drove him to the unforgiveable sin of murdering his wife. The dominance of emotion over passion led Othello to behave irrationally and succumb to bestiality. His emotions towards Desdemona are extreme; he declares feeling "too much joy" at their reunion and later admits to loving her "not wisely but too well." This extreme form of passion when distorted leads to an extreme form of hatred where he declares "I'll chop her into messes!"

The use of the exclamation combined with the violent diction portrays his unrestrained rage at being betrayed. This is a result of Othello's "trust where he trusts is absolute... he decides and acts instantaneously." (A C Bradley). The swift and decisive action is a portrayal of the lack of reason within Othello, it is testament to his inability to calmly rationalise his thoughts and course of action. Hence through the character of Othello the dangers of unrestrained passion and emotion are revealed. His imaginative nature allows Iago to masterfully put his machinations into motion and destroy both Othello and Desdemona's lives.

A further presentation of passion can be seen in the form of Desdemona's love for Othello. As stated by John Knox "woman in her greatest perfection is made to serve and obey man." Desdemona after her marriage fits this ideal perfectly, she does not argue with her husband not protest her innocence. Her passion for Othello makes her blind to what is bothering Othello, she puts it down to work pressures as her great passion prevents her from the realisation that he could possibly be displeased with her, for in her eyes she is completely devoted to him. Hence passion impairs her vision and prevents her from seeing the situation objectively, it even leads to her becoming desperate and turning to the very creator of her problems (Iago) for advice. Desdemona is so enraptured with Othello that the mere mention of betrayal

from Emilia brings forth the exclamation "beshrew me if I would do such a wrong for the whole world." The swearing of such an extreme oath indicates the depth of her passion which blinds her to the monster her husband is becoming.

The Machiavellian villain of the play – Iago, too feels passion, but not normally expected passion in the form of romantic love but the passion of ambition and destruction. William Turnbull has claimed Iago to be "an unbeliever, and denier of all things spiritual, who acknowledges God, just like Satan to defy him." This accurate commentary on Iago's character sums up his love for evil and his nihilistic nature. Iago at the beginning of the play declares himself as "I am not what I am." In the Bible it is said that God revealed himself to Moses with the words "I am what I am" thus the idea of Iago being the anti-Christ is brought out, his love of destroying the lives of others and mentally pitting himself against others supports this statement. Iago claims that his machinations to ruin Othello are "sport" the diction being suggestive of these being an enjoyable game to him. He is depicted as being the diabolical mastermind behind the birth of a conspiracy to destroy others. This image of birth is indicated through the use of the diction "womb of time". Hence the idea of conspiracy of destruction being a lovingly christened child to Iago is brought out. His passion lies in his ability to destroy.

A further illustration of his passion for evil and treachery is portrayed in the form of his belief that a constantly active and plotting mind is preferable to a sterile mind. A belief supported by the claim of "our bodies are our gardens to which our wills are our gardeners." This horticultural metaphor is apt in conveying Iago's unrestrained passion and affinity for evil. This passion is what ultimately leads to the complex machinations which are to be the unravelling of Othello and Desdemona. In this case it is possible to contend that Iago's soliloquies are a form of "motive hunting of motiveless malignity" (Samuel Coleridge) as in reality he has no motive but a passion for evil. This type of treachery would have been familiar to Shakespearean audiences who lived in a time of treachery and deceit, a time where infamous plots such as the Gunpowder Plot took place.

In conclusion, it can be argued that the extreme forms of passion felt by the characters provoked them to contradict the Chain of Being, which was the hierarchy of the universe during the Elizabethan period, a code by which people lived. Once you were placed in a level of the hierarchy, attempting to violate it could lead to dire consequences as was the case with the characters of Desdemona's and Othello's extreme passion for each other which led them to contradict the hierarchy and marry outside of their class and race, similar to how Iago's passion for destruction and ambition for lieutenantcy led him to give birth to the treacherous plots that lead to the downfall of others. Hence Shakespeare presents passion as an extremity, which if it goes unchecked could lead to great barbarism. Yet this is one of the most noble feelings humans can experience, the love for something. This passion is paradoxically glorious and barbaric in nature.

Assessment Objectives for WET02 (both sections)

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

AO5: explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

Examiner commentary

This is a very readable and fluent essay which covers all the assessment objectives well. There is some scholarly talk about the Adamic fall, the Machiavellian villain Iago, reference to the Bible with regard to Iago's "I am not what I am", the chain of being and the Gunpowder Plot, all of which secure a good score for context. While references to Bradley and Coleridge might not be to the most up to date critics they nevertheless show that this candidate is aware of different interpretations of the text. There is also some close examination of language, with detail about the "womb of time" suggesting a diabolical mastermind behind the birth of a conspiracy. "Hence the ideas of a lovingly christened child to Iago are brought out," the essay tells us.

The answer therefore covers the relevant assessment objectives well.

The essay appears to be unfinished (there was a final half sentence, not included here) and the candidate seems on the point of discussing the paradoxical nature of great passion – on the one hand it can lead to barbarism; on the other to something glorious.

The essay is placed in level 5. There is a critical evaluative argument and the term "sophisticated" is appropriate here. There is a real understanding of the issues of the play with some very neat comparisons: following Bradley the essay argues that Othello deals in "swift and decisive action", a testament to his inability to rationalise his thoughts leading to unrestrained passion: it is a case of Othello's imaginative nature versus Iago's machinations. Extreme forms of passion can be distorted to extreme forms of hatred.

There is some useful textual analysis leading to the conclusion that these machinations are a sport for Iago, an enjoyable game.

The consistency of the argument is commendable; the essay explores not just Othello's passion but also looks at Desdemona and Iago. For an even higher mark textual analysis might have been taken further, but there is sufficient here to place the essay securely in the top band.

Level 5

Exemplar 2

Question: A Streetcar Named Desire – Tennessee Williams

'Many factors contribute to Blanche's tragedy.'

In the light of this statement, explore the ways in which Williams presents Blanche's downfall.

(Total for Question 17 = 20 marks)

Please note: the requirement to include context was not stated on the paper when this examination was originally taken (May 2016). This candidate has however addressed context, and has been rewarded for this in the light of the revised mark scheme, applicable to all future sittings of the paper.

Exemplar answer

Williams' exploration of Blanche's downfall falls under many different umbrellas. It can be seen first of all through her fall in terms of socio economic standing with the loss of Belle Reve.

However her downfall is also metaphysical as her mores and ideals represent the America of old whereas what she must essentially do is adapt to the new America of the 1940s-1950s.

Blanche Dubois the aging Southern belle personifies the ethos of excess of the Bourgeoisie. Her highbrow snobbery and elitist point of view can be seen from the onset of the play with her condescending commentary of the Kowalski's' apartment, "Oh, you have a bathroom! First door to the right at the top of the stairs?" Blanche's subtle commentary on space reflects her disdain at the size of her sister's house. Furthermore, Blanche's own perception of her status as a high class Southern belle is also established through her use of long prose as well as French. "Je suis la dame aux Camellias! Vous etes Armand." Here her use of French undermines the education of Mitch to which ironically is proleptic of Blanche's fate as the line alludes to a well known romance in which a courtesan is "saved" by love but later dies of tuberculosis.

However as a whole Blanche's placement in New Orleans provides a narrative hook for the audience as her demeanour and dress establish her as the other within this setting. Williams creates this juxtaposition between Blanche and the setting to show the audience her lack of belonging from the start and there is a reflection as well of society as Williams commentator on how this is now place for the other in New America and could be even suggested that Blanche's unique nature is what in fact leads to her eventual downfall. Leading to the interpretation that Streetcar is a tragedy of the Other in light of the Us versus Them mentality created through McCarthyism in the 1950s.

Furthermore, Williams explores the metaphysical in Blanche's delusions and persistence of fantasy over reality. We as the audience first see the crack in Blanche's maintenance of her Southern belle facade in her alcoholism. The stage directions

show this "Suddenly she notices something ... removes a whiskey bottle ... pours a half tumbler of whiskey and tosses it down." This is then contradicted with her words to Stella later on "No, one's my limit." The dramatic irony created here allows for the audience a glimpse at the real broken Blanche from the start and allows for questioning of her mentality as she finds the need to conceal all aspects of her desires which declare her unladylike. Blanche's world of fantasy can be expressed as being her coping mechanism as she refuses to face up to realities of who she really is: woman with a tarnished reputation and promiscuous background. She finally admits her delusions towards Mitch after Stanley shatters her charade with proof of her tainted past. "I'll tell you what I want. Magic! I tell what ought to be the truth... don't turn the light on." The metaphorical magic here is referring to Blanche in her fantasy world, in her lies. From a psychoanalytical standpoint it is at this point now that Blanche has lost control and has slipped into her own lies, therefore suggesting she believes in them herself.

Furthermore the motif of light is often representative of finally seeing Blanche as who she is ... merely an ageing woman with a disreputable past therefore Williams creates Blanche as the character of the night not allowing anyone to see who she truly is, her own delusions add to her downfall.

Moreover, a sense of inevitability is created in Blanche's downfall and this is seen through the initial symbolism of Blanche's journey as well as the state of conflict between Stanley and Blanche. "They told me to take a streetcar named Desire and then transfer to one called Cemeteries and ride six blocks down and get off at Elysian Fields. Symbolically this journey represents Blanche's life journey through her misdoings in Laurel through desire and then past the cemeteries which is metaphorical for both her death and her family lives death then lastly followed by the allusion to the Greek land of the dead, Elysian Fields.

The connotations with Elysian Fields suggests a final nothingness or even a final resting place, which would suggest Blanche's final chance at life to which was ripped away by Stanley, evoking pathos from the audience as they sympathise with her character's lack of closure. However this can be suggested as a superficial reading as Blanche and Stanley's constant state of conflict in their opposing views, one as post modern proletariat versus the modern embodiment of the bourgeoisie suggest that her downfall was due to her own lack of adaptation and her firm dependence on men which is reflected in her final lines to the doctor "I have always depended on the kindness of strangers" whilst instead she should have depended on herself.

In conclusion Williams' uses Blanche's character as a way of expressing his own sense of repression as a gay man in the 1950s. As his situation parallels Blanche's in that they are both Others in the eyes of American society. Therefore overall A Streetcar provides harsh criticism upon the realities of life as an Other and Blanche's downfall both mentally and physically showcases to the audience the brutality and mentality of the new ethos of society thus evoking a sense of sympathy as well as awareness to Williams' commentary – Blanche's tragedy is merely a foil for the struggles of the minority "other".

Assessment Objectives for WET02 (both sections)

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

AO5: explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

Examiner commentary

The essay begins with some clear contextual references to the “mores and ideals” of the old South; quotation is used to back up points about her snobbery and elitist point of view; proleptic irony is observed with the connection between Blanche and the courtesan in *La Dame aux Camellias* “saved” by love only to meet a tragic end.

Good points are made about setting: Blanche is established as “the other” within the setting of New Orleans: a conclusion is reached that the play is “a tragedy of the other”.

So far we have seen evidence of AO3 (context) and the beginnings of AO5 (different interpretations). It is clear the candidate knows the play well, although so far quotation has been used only to back up points, rather than to be explored analytically (AO2 – the ways meanings are shaped).

The essay proceeds to show a clear awareness of the play as a play, with an audience – there is reference to the stage directions and the fact that “we, as an audience, first see a crack” in the maintenance of Blanche’s facade. Her world of fantasy is her coping mechanism and the essay argues well in favour of a psychoanalytical interpretation (more evidence of AO5) arguing that Blanche loses control and “slips into her own lies.” There is a clear sense of the playwright – what Williams does in creating Blanche as “a character of the night”, so seeing Blanche as a construct rather than writing a character study of her as a real person.

The essay addresses AO2 in looking at the play’s use of symbolism: the streetcar ride represents Blanche’s journey through life, the cemeteries are metaphorical, the Elysian Fields district of New Orleans references the Greek land of the dead. There is some good “different interpretations” response in discussing whether Stanley is mainly to blame: this is seen as a superficial reading, preference being given to an interpretation that puts more blame on Blanche’s failure to adapt and rely on “the kindness of strangers” rather than herself.

In its conclusion the essay reminds us that Williams himself was gay and therefore was familiar with the concept of “the other”; a point about the brutality and mentality of the new ethos of society seems about to be emerge, but presumably because of time constraints the essay finishes mid sentence.

This was another good essay to read – well informed, with “controlled discussion”, “fluently embedded examples” aware of the “nuances and subtleties” of the writer’s craft. These are all Level 4 qualities. The essay does not, quite reach level 5: to achieve this, more analysis of language “evaluating the effects of literary features” would be required. The essay comes close to the “sophisticated use of application of alternative interpretations to illuminate own critical position” but does not respond directly to the assertion in the question that some factors “contribute *more forcefully than others*” although much is implied. **The essay is placed therefore at the top of level 4.**

Exemplar 3

Question: Twelfth Night – William Shakespeare

'A play that celebrates the positive force of desire, without ever forgetting its darker aspects.'

In the light of this statement, explore how Shakespeare presents various types of desire.

In your answer, you must consider relevant contextual factors.

(Total for Question 6 = 30 marks)

Exemplar answer

In the play "Twelfth Night" by William Shakespeare the genre is very clearly a romantic comedy. However Shakespeare also likes to show the audience that it isn't always that wedded bliss everyone thinks it to be, it can actually lead to a lot of suffering and pain for those who express said love. This is evident through the characters Orsino, Olivia and Malvolio.

To begin with, we straight away receive the message that love leads to suffering as at the start of the play we see Orsino wallowing dramatically over his unrequited love towards Olivia. He cries, "If music be the food of love, play on," which is not only the most famous line in the play but also the most self-explanatory surrounding his love, he desires and demands more love, "excess of it" so much so that it will kill him. Thus displaying to the reader that this desire to feed his emotion also described as an "appetite" may lead to death, showing the dark side of his love.

As well as that, Orsino then continues on to the point of being violent and seeing the aggressive side of love. Men during the Shakespearean times were seen as rulers and strong, heartless people, and Shakespeare uses Orsino's wallowing in a pit of despair to show how a passionate sentiment of love can completely change someone, even a strong man. Shakespeare plays a lot in this play on the idea of what men and women are meant to be like, especially when Viola is washed up on a sea shore and has to disguise herself as a "eunuch" in order to be safe. Shakespeare seems to be saying that women need to be men in order to be safe, just as she now thinks she has lost her brother (and is vulnerable) and Olivia is on her own too having lost both her father and her brother. Nevertheless both these women turn out to be strong and later Viola is able to talk to the Duke about the true nature of love and Olivia is able to keep away from men by wearing the veil of mourning until she finds the right one. So this is a play that not only reverses accepted gender roles in Shakespeare's society through swapping costumes, it plays on the strengths of men and women (maybe because it is called Twelfth Night when traditionally anything can happen and the normal rules are changed and women come out best).

However, this strong force of desire, unrequited love, swallows up Orsino. This is evident when he states how love has turned him into a hart, an innocent, vulnerable

and delicate animal, which first of all implies beauty and sweetness to the audience. Unfortunately, he then goes on to declare that his desires pursue him "like fell and cruel hounds". This shows how love is being hunted down by his desires so much that so much desire could kill love and therefore him, as love is all he has, thus showing the darker side of emotion.

When the audience believe that is all, Shakespeare rapidly shows him the situation escalates even more so love can lead to violence. Represented through the two drunk uncles who challenge Cesario to a fight as Olivia loves him. Once again the cousins who this time want to kill Malvolio for being so ridiculously in love with Olivia and finally Orsino who will quite clearly kill anyone or anything for the beloved Olivia. Shakespeare used this violence to show that love and desires do not only cause yourself to suffer yet they also lead to the suffering of other people therefore showing its power, darkness and gravity.

Other than Orsino, there are in other characters in the play who feel strong love towards Olivia. Malvolio who is low in the hierarchy suffers greatly due to his emotion toward Olivia. In Shakespeare's day there was a strong sense of your position in society. Malvolio is only a steward and the trick is played on him by Sir Toby etc because he takes it upon himself to be more important than he really is. Also he is seen as a Puritan, a very strict sort of Christian in Shakespeare's day who does not believe in "cakes and ale. He is mocked by others who even shout "pistol him, pistol him." once again showing darkness and violence However, with Malvolio it isn't the metaphorical darkness he suffers from, it is the literal. After the constant mocking, Maria, Toby and Andrew accuse and frame Malvolio of being insane which is ironic as he was considered the only sane one. They lock him up in a room "as dark as ignorance, though ignorance were as dark as hell" thus showing to the audience love and desire to win Olivia's love and not only lead him to hell, literal darkness but also emotional. He becomes darkness, therefore making the audience notice the gravity of love and darkness and its link.

In conclusion, we see how Shakespeare succeeds in representing how love and desires do not always lead to wedded bliss yet it also leads to mental and literal darkness as it is an emotion that devours all other emotions you previously felt evident throughout the whole play in most characters thus showing the importance of the message Shakespeare attempts and succeeds in sending to the audience. It creates a feel of empathy towards the characters thus emphasising the emotion of love and unfortunately the darkness also. Some people see it as a happy play, but that is to overlook the way that the play is also sad. Different people will interpret it differently but Feste's final song is about the rain that rains everyday so, although most people end up married and happy, there is also a mood of melancholy. This fits in with the "darker aspects".

Assessment Objectives for WET02 (both sections)

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

AO5: explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

Examiner commentary

This essay focuses on the suffering that passion can cause. The balance in the assertion - which states that the play celebrates the positive force of love without forgetting its darker aspects - is not taken into account; instead, this essay answers a much more straightforward question on the suffering and pain that love can bring. Candidates need to be reminded that the statement supplied in the question is there for a reason and that it should be taken into account when responding to the injunction (the question itself) and, because it offers a single point of view, gives the essay a good starting point for gaining credit under AO5 (exploring different interpretations).

The essay begins by stating that it will address the sufferings of Orsino, Olivia and Malvolio (reflecting, presumably, the “various types of desire” in the injunction.) Orsino is seen as wallowing over unrequited love. There is some misreading in this essay: in his opening speech Orsino does *not* want his appetite to kill him, he wants the appetite itself to die. Later, Sir Andrew and Sir Toby are both referred to as “uncles” who is, of course, incorrect (Sir Toby is Olivia’s uncle; Sir Andrew is his friend).

We have some element of context response in the statement that “men during Shakespearean times were seen as rulers and strong, heartless people”, but this is sweeping and unexplained. The essay makes a stronger point when starting to look at the play as addressing issues of gender, with the women successfully transcending traditional gender roles. There is also a contextual point about one’s place in society’s hierarchy, with Malvolio being only a steward, the trick being played upon him because he forgets his place.

Assertions are made without being backed up. We are told that “Orsino will quite clearly kill anyone or anything for the beloved Olivia”(is this a reference to his “Why should I not... kill what I love?” in the last act – it is not clear).

There is some focus on the word “darkness” which fits with the “darker aspects” in the question’s assertion. The argument is relevant here although, as the concluding paragraph suggests, the candidate might have been happier answering on a different question such as “Show that love and desires do not always lead to wedded bliss.” We have an essay that is broadly sound but tells us what would have been said in answer to a different, but similar, question.

As a result it sits at the bottom of level 3. It offers a “clear response”. It is thinnest on different interpretations – a matter addressed only in the final paragraph by looking at Feste’s song. On the whole it is better than the level 2 descriptors of “surface reading only” and “general points”, but mainly as a result of not responding closely to the question it reaches level 3, but only just.

Level 3

Exemplar 4

Question: Death of a Salesman – Arthur Miller

'Willy's inability to reconcile his dreams of a better life with his actual situation is deeply damaging – and not just to himself.'

In the light of this statement, explore how Miller presents the damaging consequences of Willy's unrealistic dreams.

(Total for Question 15 = 20 marks)

Please note: the requirement to include context was not stated on the paper when this examination was originally taken (May 2016). This answer has a revised mark therefore, one which would have been given in response to the revised mark scheme, applicable to all future sittings of the paper.

Exemplar answer

In Arthur Miller's "Death of a Salesman, Willy Lomax seems to be illustrated as a failure in the capitalist system. This might be because of two aspects: greedy personality of Willy and his inability to accept reality rather than his imagination. From the title, it can be understood that these features prepares the end of the main character, Willy. However, this is not only affecting the "salesman" (Willy) but the people around him.

Willy's dreams are not achievable compared to the successful people (Ben, Charley, Bernard, his father, Dave Singleman). This is because Willy is never satisfied. The metaphor of Chevy that appears to represent Willy's dreams can be taken as the example of dissatisfaction. ("Chevrolet, Linda, is the greatest car ever built" "Chevrolet, they ought to prohibit the manufacture of that car") another aspect is that, according to original index of the American Dream Willy has achieved it since he had his family, a house and a car that he ignores to see and requires more. However, his technique for achievement does not fit. He thinks being "well liked" is the key which actually requires work. Additionally he rejects the people who liked him and wanted to help such as Charley who proposes work and Ben who asks him to go to Alaska with him. Due to these facts, he is trapped in a dilemma and between two schools (reality and dream).

Biff is the character that is mostly affected by Willy's inconsistent behaviours due to dream and reality. Willy does not fit to the lectures he gives to his son. ("Since when do you let your mother carry wash up the stairs?") – respect for women / "I don't like you [Willy] yelling at her [Linda] all the time" Willy does not respect Linda. Biff clearly sees that when he discovers his father's affair when he visits him in Boston ("You phony little fake!".) As a result, Biff who failed the test, again, because of Willy, does not go to university because of the loss of respect towards Willy "And he [Biff] took them down in the cellar and burned them [the sneakers] up in the furnace" – he gave up on his dreams.

Willy's state of mind that presents himself lonely. Linda who is a wife who is a cheated woman always longs for her husband to fix their marriage. This represented with the symbol of stockings which means the relationship between the partners. Nevertheless, Willy does not accept the existence of problems, too "I [Willy] won't have you [Linda] mending stockings in this house!"

Furthermore he affects the perception of life of Happy. Happy is like his father. He does not value what he has, as well as lies about his position. In the end he still does not accept the failure of the dream and his father's methods as someone raised by him "I'm staying right in this city, and I'm gonna bust this racket" this statement of Happy is parallel to Willy's response to Ben's offer "We're gonna do it here". The cliff-hanger there is open to debate. If we consider Willy as a foreshadowing, he leads his other son, Happy, to failure, too.

Overall, Willy's unstable state of mind that cannot distinguish between reality and fiction leads to his end. However, it does not only affect him but his family. Biff who discovers his father's affair, cannot grab a hold in the capitalist world, Happy repeats his father's mistakes and Linda becomes a victim who has been cheated and left lonely after Willy's death.

Assessment Objectives for WET02

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

AO5: explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

Examiner commentary

This essay starts confidently: Willy is a failure in the capitalist system. The question itself is addressed – reality is seen as opposed to imagination, and the effect Willy has is considered, not only on himself, but on people around him.

The metaphor of the Chevrolet and the American Dream is mentioned, but there is no exploration; Willy's rejection of people who want to help is referred to and the conclusion is reached that Willy is trapped in a dilemma between reality and dream. The argument here is not totally logical – these tend to be general points about Willy, his dreams and his actions.

The next paragraph explores how Willy's behaviour affects others. Quotation is used, but it is there to illustrate points rather than to be analysed – there is no exploration of the writer's craft, and characters here tend to be seen as "real people". In the second paragraph the answer tends to drift into narrative.

The final paragraph looks at the effect on Happy and the similarities between Happy and his father. There is a reference to the fact that the statement "We're gonna do it here" is open to interpretation and this is seen as a cliff-hanger, but this would need more exploration to gain credit under AO5 (different interpretations).

There is no real contextual reference either. This is a level 2 answer which fails to achieve the skills required in level 3 of discrimination and subtlety. The response however is "clear".

The answer is placed in the middle of level 2.