



Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

January 2023

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
In English Literature (4ET1)
Paper 2R: Modern Drama and Literary
Heritage Texts

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Publications Code 4ET1_02R__ER_2301_PEF

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Paper Overview

This International GCSE 4ET1 02 English Literature examination consists of two sections, Modern Drama and Literary Heritage, and lasts for 1 hour and 30 minutes. This is an open book examination.

The questions on this paper have been designed to enable candidates to show what they can achieve in relation to the detailed study of texts.

Section A - Modern Drama

Candidates answer one of the two questions based on the text they have studied. The text choices are:

A View from the Bridge – Arthur Miller

An Inspector Calls – J B Priestley

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time – Mark Haddon (adapted by Simon Stephens)

Kindertransport – Diane Samuels

Death and the King's Horseman – Wole Soyinka

The questions require candidates to draw on their knowledge of the play, to consider the writer's use of language, form and structure and to provide supporting examples.

The Assessment Objectives assessed in Section A are:

AO1	Demonstrate a close knowledge and understanding of texts, maintaining a critical style and presenting an informed personal engagement.
AO2	Analyse the language, form and structure used by a writer to create meanings and effects.

Section B - Literary Heritage

Candidates are required to answer one of the two questions based on the text they have studied. The text choices for Section B are:

Romeo and Juliet – William Shakespeare

Macbeth – William Shakespeare

The Merchant of Venice – William Shakespeare

Pride and Prejudice – Jane Austen

Great Expectations – Charles Dickens

The Scarlet Letter – Nathaniel Hawthorne

The questions in Section B, like in Section A, require candidates to draw on their knowledge of their chosen text, to consider the writer's use of language, form and structure and to provide relevant examples. In addition, candidates are asked to refer to context in this section.

The Assessment Objectives assessed in Section B are:

AO1	Demonstrate a close knowledge and understanding of texts, maintaining a critical style and presenting an informed personal engagement.
AO2	Analyse the language, form and structure used by a writer to create meanings and effects.
AO4	Show understanding of the relationships between texts and the contexts in which they were written.

Candidates are advised to spend 45 minutes on each section.

The total number of marks available for this paper is 60. Both sections carry 30 marks per question.

Introduction

The January 2023 series was another successful series. There were no errors in the paper and no erratum notices. It was pleasing to see the full range of achievement on this single tier paper covering the 9-1 grades and, once again, centres should be congratulated on preparing their candidates so well.

In Section A, as has been the case in previous series, the best answers used full and deep knowledge from across the chosen text to form relevant arguments fully focused on the question. In these answers, a broad balance between AO1 and AO2 demands was achieved, with candidates exploring well-selected techniques and their impact. Less successful responses tended to perform better on AO1, often giving just a light touch to AO2, or not considering AO2 at all. Candidates at all levels of achievement performed best when they identified with the texts as drama rather than merely texts. This awareness and insight led to some effective and apposite comment on detail. Less successful answers tended to lack a valid structure, which led some to drift away from the focus of the question. Some also tended to lapse into narration of the plot, thereby limiting themselves to the lower reaches of the mark scheme. It is worth noting that narrative detail is a key descriptor of Level 2.

In Section B, the best responses used the question to build well-developed and focused answers that incorporated a balance of the three assessment objectives in this section (AO1, AO2 and AO4). It was pleasing to see some particularly insightful responses, which engaged fully with the question and provided detail from the text that had been chosen with discrimination to support the arguments that had been presented. As with Section A, the less successful answers tended to narrate events or describe characters, sometimes interspersing this with relevant argument.

Candidates should be reminded that AO4 is assessed in Section B and that AO1, AO2 and AO4 are of equal value. As has been the case in previous series, the most effective answers integrated points on context throughout, often to develop points for AO1 and AO2. Candidates should try to avoid writing absolutely everything they know about the context of the text into their answers, but instead select appropriate, relevant detail. In many cases, further consideration of AO2 would have helped candidates to have achieved the higher marks. The mark schemes for the question papers, available on the Pearson Edexcel website, provide comprehensive suggestions as to what candidates may choose to write about. These can be particularly helpful for candidates to use in preparation for the examination to think about the types of comments they might choose to make on language, form and structure, as well as context.

Finally, although there is no formal requirement for candidates to start their answers with an introduction and a conclusion, this can often help candidates to maintain a focus on the question. It can also help to spend a few minutes at the start of the examination to produce a plan. Not only can this help to ensure a focus on the question, but it can also help candidates to think of the range of ideas that they would like to include in their answers, ensuring full coverage of all the assessment objectives assessed.

4ET1 02R Questions

In this section, a summary of candidate performance is provided for each question. There were just a few responses at most for each question this series.

SECTION A - MODERN DRAMA

A View from the Bridge

Question 1

'Beatrice is presented as an admirable character in the play.'

How far do you agree with this view?

This was a successful question and it was evident from the responses seen that there were lots of opportunities for candidates to show their understanding for AO1, as well as much for candidates to consider in relation to language, form and structure for AO2.

Responses considered Beatrice's caring nature (such as how she prepares for the arrival of Marco and Rodolpho), how she is a good wife to Eddie and how she confronts her husband over his feelings for Catherine.

For AO2, there was some discussion of how Beatrice questions Eddie, demonstrating the distance in their relationship (*'When am I gonna be a wife again, Eddie?'*), and how Beatrice is a constant in Eddie's life, evident throughout the play, regardless of his behaviour.

As seen in previous series, the stronger responses used points for AO2 to develop points in relation to AO1. There was some evidence of imbalance in addressing the assessment objectives and candidates should be reminded that AO1 and AO2 are of equal weight in the mark scheme.

Question 2

Explore the importance of tension in *A View from the Bridge*.

On the whole, the responses to Question 2 demonstrated a clear understanding of the importance of tension in the play.

Responses tended to focus on the tension in the relationship between Beatrice and Eddie, the tension created as a result of Catherine's blossoming relationship with Rodolpho and the tension between Eddie and Marco ultimately resulting in Eddie's tragic demise.

For AO2, there was evidence of points covering language, form and structure. There were some interesting points made about the boxing scene and what the stage directions suggest in terms of the rising tension between Eddie and Rodolpho/Marco, Marco's rage at Eddie's betrayal forming the climax of the play and the affection Eddie shows Beatrice at the end of the play, which relieves the tension.

An Inspector Calls

Question 3

'In the play, women have very different lives from men, according to their class.'

Explore the roles of women in *An Inspector Calls*.

The performance of this question was as intended and responses were typical of previous series.

There were some detailed responses to this question, which focused on Mrs Birling and Sheila as representatives of the upper classes and Eva/Daisy and Edna as working class.

There were some thoughtful points made about Eva's/Daisy's physical absence from the play and how this reflects the invisibility of working-class women in society, how Mrs Birling does not use her position of privilege and power to help working-class women even though she is on the committee of a women's charity organisation and how low-class women like Eva/Daisy were exploited by men in the upper classes. There was also discussion of Mr Birling's treatment of Eva/Daisy and Edna and what this shows more generally about the treatment of working-class women at the time.

For AO2, there was some thoughtful consideration of the Inspector's final speech, '*but there are millions and millions and millions of Eva Smiths and John Smiths still left with us*', exploring how the Birlings' treatment of the working classes was representative of the wider treatment of the working classes. Other points made related to how Mrs Birling conforms to social customs of the time, which accentuated the belief that men and women have distinct roles, and how Sheila challenges these beliefs.

There were some comments regarding the context of the play. Whilst some candidates effectively used these points to successfully develop points in relation to AO1 and AO2, candidates should be reminded that AO4 is not assessed in this section of the paper.

Question 4

Discuss the presentation of one character you respect in the play.

Most candidates chose Sheila as the character they respect in the play, contrasting how Sheila is presented at the start of the play with how she changes by the end.

There was much discussion centring on Sheila's reaction to the news of Eva's/Daisy's death, how Sheila confronts her parents for failing to accept responsibility and how Sheila becomes an ally of the Inspector by the end of the play.

For AO2, as with Question 3, there was lots for candidates to be able to discuss. For language, many candidates explored how Sheila's words at the end of the play echo the Inspector's ('*Fire and blood and anguish! And it frightens me the way you talk*') and how Sheila's redemption by the end of the play suggests that there is a sign of hope that the younger generation will be harbingers of social justice.

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time

Question 5

How is Siobhan presented as a character worthy of respect in the play?

There were no responses to this question.

Question 6

Explore the theme of responsibility in *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time*.

Based on the responses seen, this question appears to have been successful. Responses tended to focus on Eddie's responsibility as a father to Christopher. There was also consideration of Judy walking out on her responsibility as a mother to Christopher and then her redemption at the end of the play.

The mark scheme outlines the full range of points candidates could make in relation to the three assessment objectives.

Kindertransport

Question 7

Discuss the importance of family relationships in *Kindertransport*.

There were no discernible issues with this question, with there being much for candidates to be able to consider, as set out in the mark scheme.

The family relationships between Eva/Evelyn, Faith, Lil and Helga were all considered.

Question 8

In what ways is the child, Eva, presented in the play?

In the few responses seen, there was consideration of Eva's relationship with her birth mother, Helga, as her mother prepares her for life in England. Points also centred on Eva's experience on the Kindertransport, how she changes as a result of moving to live with Lil and how she tries her best to ensure that her parents can come to join her in England. There was also some interesting discussion on the ongoing impact of the Ratcatcher on Eva/Evelyn throughout her life, which is something she first encounters as a child.

Death and the King's Horseman

Question 9

In what ways is Olunde presented as different from his father, Elesin, in the play?

There were no responses to this question.

Question 10

Explore the theme of guilt in *Death and the King's Horseman*.

There were no responses to this question.

SECTION B - MODERN DRAMA

Romeo and Juliet

Question 11

How does Shakespeare present Tybalt in the play?

This question proved to be successful with there being much for candidates to be able to explore.

Many candidates considered Tybalt's violent nature, his role in the disturbance on the streets early in the play, his angry reaction when he realises that Romeo is at the Capulet ball, his fight with Mercutio and then his death at the hands of Romeo.

For AO2, candidates considered a range of points, including the hatred Tybalt shows towards the Montagues evident in the language he uses, such as '*villain*' and '*Boy*', how his fight with Mercutio and then Romeo is a turning point in the play and how his hatred of the Capulets is consistent.

AO4 points often centred on the common nature of physical duels and the meaning of the name 'Tybalt'.

The more successful responses appropriately selected suitable points to sustain their arguments, with integrated analysis of language, form and structure and supporting, relevant points on context.

Question 12

Explore the significance of marriage in *Romeo and Juliet*.

This proved to be an accessible question with a range of points seen for AO1. There were some thoughtful points made about Romeo acting impulsively by proposing to Juliet the day he meets her, how Friar Lawrence plays an integral role in agreeing to marry Romeo and Juliet and how their marriage triggers the events of the rest of the play.

There was also some thoughtful analysis for AO2, such as Friar Lawrence's language conveying his hope that the marriage of Romeo and Juliet will end the feud between the two families ('*To blaze your marriage, reconcile your friends*'), Juliet's refusal to marry Paris and her father's violent and extreme reaction to this, and the contrast in the ways in which Romeo and Paris seek Juliet's hand in marriage.

A number of the responses successfully explored AO1 and developed points by building in AO2 and AO4. Points in relation to AO4 often explored how, in Elizabethan England, men would effectively own their daughters and how marriages were often arranged by parents.

Macbeth

Question 13

How far do you agree with the view that the ending of the play is successful?

Responses to Question 13 mostly argued that the ending of the play is successful. This proved to be a successful question with candidates presenting a range of different arguments.

Responses tended to focus on Macduff's and Macbeth's duel, how Macduff and Malcolm are shown to be honourable and how good overcomes evil with the end of Macbeth's bloody rule.

For AO2, responses considered the language used to describe Macbeth's duel with Macduff, the elements of a Greek tragedy evident in the play and how Malcolm restores good in the country.

For AO4, there was consideration of how the play was written to please James I, hence good overcoming evil after Macbeth interferes with the Divine Right of Kings.

Question 14

'Banquo is a brave and good man.'

How is Banquo presented as a morally good character in *Macbeth*?

This proved to be another successful question, with a range of points seen in relation to the three assessment objectives.

For AO1, candidates contrasted Banquo's reaction to the Witches compared to Macbeth's, how Banquo suspects Macbeth of Duncan's murder and how Macbeth's 'ghost' haunts Macbeth.

There was much for candidates to consider in relation to AO2. For example, there was consideration of the description of Banquo alongside Macbeth in battle against the Norwegian army, the language Banquo uses to show his loyalty to Duncan (*'my allegiance clear'*) and how Banquo acts as a foil to Macbeth.

For AO4, candidates considered how Banquo is presented differently to his role in the original source for the play and how his presentation as a morally good character was likely a result of the belief that he was a relative of James I.

The Merchant of Venice

Question 15

Discuss the presentation of one character you find interesting in the play.

There were no discernible difficulties with this question. The indicative content in the mark scheme outlines the range of points candidates could make in relation to the three assessment objectives, depending on the character chosen.

The one response for this question focused on Shylock as an interesting character. Points centred on the discrimination Shylock experiences, the bond and the punishment given to Shylock in the court scene.

Question 16

Explore the theme of punishment in *The Merchant of Venice*.

As with Question 15, there were no discernible issues with this question. The mark scheme outlines the range of points that could be made in relation to the theme of punishment in the play.

Pride and Prejudice

Question 17

Explore how marriage is often presented as loveless in the novel.

There were no discernible difficulties with this question and the mark scheme outlines the range of opportunities for candidates to demonstrate understanding for the three assessment objectives.

Question 18

How is Mr Darcy presented in *Pride and Prejudice*?

As with Question 17, this question appears to have been successful. Points tended to centre on how Mr Darcy is presented initially, how Elizabeth gradually gets to know his true nature and how Mr Darcy goes against Lady Catherine de Bourgh's wishes towards the end of the novel by marrying Elizabeth.

Great Expectations

Question 19

Discuss the relationship between Pip and one female character in the novel.

There were no responses to this question.

Question 20

'I have been bent and broken, but – I hope – into a better shape.' (Estella)

Explore the importance of learning lessons in *Great Expectations*.

There were no discernible difficulties with this question, with opportunities for candidates to consider AO1, AO2 and AO4, as outlined in the mark scheme.

The Scarlet Letter

Question 21

How is Governor Bellingham presented in *The Scarlet Letter*?

There were no responses to this question.

Question 22

'Some characters show true courage and determination, whilst others do not.'

Explore the theme of mental strength in the novel.

There were no responses to this question.

Top Tips

As a summary, here are some top tips for this paper:

- There is a choice of two questions for each text. Candidates are able to play to their strengths by selecting the question they feel most confident with.
- Candidates are advised to spend 45 minutes on each section.
- The indicative content in the mark scheme shows possible points candidates might make in their answer. However, these are just suggested points; any relevant ideas are rewarded.
- A brief introduction and conclusion can help to ensure that responses remain focused on the question.
- A brief plan at the start can help candidates to think of the range of points they would like to include in their essay.
- If there is a quotation given in the question, candidates can use this as stimulus for their answer (perhaps as a starting point).
- In Section A, both AO1 and AO2 are assessed.
- Remember, AO1 and AO2 are of equal value in Section A.
- Context (AO4) is not assessed in Section A.
- There are three parts to AO1:
 - demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the text
 - maintain a critical style
 - present an informed critical style.
- For AO1, candidates should show their knowledge and understanding of the text through the scope and depth of examples selected from across the text.
- As part of AO1, candidates are required to provide examples to support points. As an open book exam, this is likely to be quotations from the text. However, depending on the point being made, this could be a paraphrase or a reference to a specific part of the play.
- Candidates are able to show personal engagement for AO1 by offering their own individual thoughts on relevant ideas.
- Quotations should be selected carefully, which fully support the points being made; precise quotations, such as a word or a phrase, are more likely to show the necessary discrimination in the selection of evidence.
- Responses which re-tell the story are typical of Level 2, where the key descriptor is 'largely narrative'.
- For AO2, candidates should not just consider language but also form and structure.
- Although the mark scheme does not specify the need to use literary terminology, this could well help candidates to focus on the need to explore language, form and structure for AO2.
- Form, for AO2, could include:
 - the type of text
 - the physical organisation of the text, including stage directions
 - the genre
 - use of prose / verse.

- More successful responses will intertwine the assessment objectives to fully develop ideas.
- Finding examples from across the text to support a point can help to develop ideas.
- The Point, Evidence, Explanation (PEE) approach can help candidates to achieve a mark at least in Level 3.
- Remember, in addition to AO1 and AO2, context (AO4) is assessed in Section B.
- For context (AO4), candidates could comment on a number of aspects, including:
 - the author's life
 - the historical setting, time and location
 - social and cultural context
 - the literary context
 - how the text is received at different times
- Candidates should try to avoid providing a summary of what they know about the writer and try to select appropriate points for context which support the ideas in the main part of their essay.
- The most successful responses integrate references to context throughout, often using context to support and develop points for AO1 and AO2.

