



Examiners' Report Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2024

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
English Literature (4WET2) Unit 2: Modern
Drama and Literary Heritage

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Unit Overview

This International GCSE 4WET2 01 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 in this unit 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 unit is 60. Both sections carry 30 marks per question.

Introduction

Summer 2024 was the first series for the modular version of this qualification and there were just a few entries for this unit. Nevertheless, it was pleasing to see a number of responses securing marks in the top levels.

For 4WET2 01, the questions in Section A are the same as those in the linear paper, 4ET1 02. For a comprehensive guide as to how the questions in Section A performed, please see the Principal Examiner's Report for 4ET1 02. The Section A responses seen for the modular version of this qualification were very similar in performance to those seen in the linear version. The most successful responses 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.

The questions in Section B for the modular version of this qualification are different to the questions in the linear paper. However, based on the responses seen, the two sets of questions performed in a very similar way. The best responses used the question to build well-developed and focused answers that incorporated a balance of the three assessment objectives assessed in this section (AO1, AO2 and AO4). 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.

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 (AO2), as well as context (AO4).

4WET2 01 Questions

SECTION A - MODERN DRAMA

The most popular text in Section A was *An Inspector Calls*. Although very few responses were seen for the other texts in this section, the indicative content in the mark scheme outlines the full range of possible points candidates could make, in relation to each question, for the two assessment objectives assessed in this section (AO1 and AO2).

Question 3

'The Birlings place more importance on their family name than on relationships with each other.'

Discuss the significance of family in *An Inspector Calls*.

This proved to be an accessible question, with many candidates securing marks in the top levels.

At the very least, candidates were able to consider some of the relationships within the family, such as the relationship between Eric and his father, Mr Birling. The more successful responses considered how a number of characters in the play seemingly care more about maintaining their standing in society than they do about fostering loving relationships within the family.

Much discussion centred on Mr Birling and his determination for the scandal of his family's involvement with Eva/Daisy to not be made public, with him even offering 'thousands' to try to cover it up. A number of responses contrasted the behaviour of the older generation with that of the younger generation, with Eric and Sheila showing remorse for their actions and appear to be genuinely concerned about Eva's/Daisy's fate.

For AO2, there was some focus on Mr Birling's belittling of the younger generation, the lack of concern in the language of both Mr and Mrs Birling about the consequences of their actions on Eva/Daisy, along with the role reversal of Eric and Sheila in contrast to their parents.

Question 4

How far do you agree with the view that Gerald shows that he is selfish in the play?

This question appears to have presented a similar level of opportunity for candidates as question 3.

The less successful responses to this question tended to focus on how Gerald is presented in a more general way in the play. The more successful responses focused on the question and closely considered ways in which Gerald is, and is not, presented as selfish. A number of candidates took a balanced approach,

considering ways in which Gerald is and is not selfish, before reaching an overall view.

Points made in support of the view that Gerald is presented as selfish included his reluctance to admit his involvement with Eva/Daisy, his wanting Sheila to leave the room in order to hide his behaviour from her and his focus on uncovering the true identity of the Inspector rather than feeling remorse for Eva's/Daisy's fate. A number of candidates also considered how, at the end of the play, Gerald expects Sheila to accept the ring and to marry him still, despite the revelations of the night.

Points made to suggest Gerald is not selfish include the fact that he does, eventually, reveal his relationship with Eva/Daisy and how he does show some concern for what happened to Eva/Daisy following the end of their relationship.

For AO2, there were some particularly thoughtful points made about the language Gerald uses, specifically when he believes that he will not have to take responsibility for his actions having discovered that the Inspector is not a real police inspector.

SECTION B – LITERARY HERITAGE

The most popular text in Section B was *Macbeth*. Although very few responses were seen for the other texts in this section, the indicative content in the mark scheme outlines the full range of possible points candidates could make, in relation to each question, for the three assessment objectives assessed in this section (AO1, AO2 and AO4).

Question 13

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

A range of characters were selected by candidates as the character considered interesting in the play, including Macbeth, Lady Macbeth, Banquo and Macduff. When candidates are given the freedom to choose a character to discuss the presentation of, responses are assessed on the argument presented (any choice is valid).

There were some interesting reasons given for choosing a particular character. For example, some candidates chose Macbeth because of his complex nature. There was some discussion of how Macbeth is, at least initially, presented as a noble character but is later corrupted by others, particularly Lady Macbeth and the Witches. Some candidates chose Macduff as their interesting character because of his steadfast loyalty to King Duncan and to Scotland, even leaving his family vulnerable for the greater good of ending Macbeth's tyrannical rule.

The most successful responses were able to build an argument based on evidence from across the text instead of focusing on one particular event in the play. The less successful responses tended to provide general discussion of a character without specifically considering how the character chosen is interesting.

A wide range of points were seen in relation to both AO2 and AO4. For AO2, there was much evidence of candidates closely analysing language. It is worth remembering that understanding of both form and structure is also assessed as part of AO2.

For AO4, the most successful responses included points that were fully relevant to the argument presented. Candidates should try to avoid providing a biography of Shakespeare at the start or end of their response and, instead, integrate points throughout that develop points made in relation to AO1 and AO2.

Question 14

Explore the significance of the different deaths in *Macbeth*.

There was evidence of clear personal engagement in the responses to this question, with the most successful responses closely considering the significance of the different deaths in the play rather than providing a general narrative overview of when and why they happen.

Candidates tended to focus on the deaths of King Duncan, Banquo, Lady Macbeth and Macbeth. There were also some thoughtful responses that considered the significance of the death of the treacherous Thane of Cawdor, with Macbeth subsequently being named his successor.

The significance of King Duncan's death was generally considered in some detail, with many responses noting how this is a turning point in the play, with a number of deaths following this in rather quick succession. There was also some interesting discussion of the death of Lady Macbeth, marking her ultimate fall from power.

As with question 13, the most successful responses selected relevant points for AO2 and AO4 that fully supported the points made in relation to AO1. There was more evidence of understanding of how literary techniques are used, rather than form and structure, for AO2. Nevertheless, some candidates discussed the significance of the staging, for example the reasons for King Duncan's death taking place off-stage.

A range of points were seen in relation to AO4. However, common points made were in relation to James I and Shakespeare's likely intention of not wanting to upset the monarch, thereby demonstrating the awful consequences of murdering a king through Macbeth's death. Some candidates also considered the impact on the natural order when King Duncan is killed and how the play reflects the belief of the time that, ultimately, good will overcome evil.

Conclusion

Candidates should be congratulated for their hard work and centres are thanked for preparing their students so well for this examination. We do wish you the best of luck with your results.

To support with future series, please find below some advice for responding to questions in this unit.

Top Tips

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

- 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:
 - o demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the text
 - o maintain a critical style
 - o 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.