



Examiners' Report Principal Examiner Feedback

June 2025

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE in
English Literature (4WET2/01R) (Modular)
Unit 2: Modern Drama and Literary
Heritage Texts

Edexcel and BTEC Qualifications

Edexcel and BTEC qualifications are awarded by Pearson, the UK's largest awarding body. We provide a wide range of qualifications including academic, vocational, occupational and specific programmes for employers. For further information visit our qualifications websites at www.edexcel.com or www.btec.co.uk. Alternatively, you can get in touch with us using the details on our contact us page at www.edexcel.com/contactus.

Pearson: helping people progress, everywhere

Pearson aspires to be the world's leading learning company. Our aim is to help everyone progress in their lives through education. We believe in every kind of learning, for all kinds of people, wherever they are in the world. We've been involved in education for over 150 years, and by working across 70 countries, in 100 languages, we have built an international reputation for our commitment to high standards and raising achievement through innovation in education. Find out more about how we can help you and your students at: www.pearson.com/uk

June 2025

Publications Code 4WET2_01R_2506

All the material in this publication is copyright

© Pearson Education Ltd 2025

Paper Overview

This International GCSE 4WET2 /10R 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. Clean copies of set texts may be taken into the examination room.

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. AOs are equally weighted, but responses are assessed using a holistic approach rather than a mathematical calculation.

Introduction

The June 2025 series was yet 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.

There were a lot of candidates achieving Level 5, with some very impressive responses that went beyond a mark of 30. These candidates demonstrated a comprehensive understanding of analytical approaches and were able to perceptively respond to the question. Sophisticated exploration of AO2 led to some poised and lucid work with many achieving full marks.

NB It should be noted that section A on this paper is the same as the main paper 4ET1 02R for which there is an ERA report with exemplar whole scripts available on the Pearson website.

4WET2 /01R Questions

In this section, a summary of candidate performance is provided for each question attempted.

SECTION A - MODERN DRAMA

A View from the Bridge

Question 1

How does Rodolpho change in the play?

There were no responses to this question.

Question 2

‘Although Eddie agrees to take in Beatrice’s cousins, he ultimately betrays them.’ Discuss the theme of betrayal in *A View from the Bridge*.

There were no responses to this question.

An Inspector Calls

Question 3

‘The Inspector makes it clear that the Birlings and Gerald Croft have a duty to look after other people less fortunate than themselves.’ Discuss the theme of duty in *An Inspector Calls*.

An Inspector Calls was by far the most popular text chosen and this question yielded a massive range of answers in both quality and approach. The most straightforward responses tended to have a character-by-character structure, sometimes just concentrating on those figures, prompted by the leading quotation in the question, and itemise how each of the Birlings, Gerald and the Inspector did (or more likely, did not) do their duty by Eva Smith. The most sophisticated treated duty as a more abstract concept and were able to pick up on every nuance of each quotation from the play that mentioned it or its synonym responsibility. Ultimately these answers widened their considerations out into the political sphere and the tension between those who take an ‘every man for himself’ (‘*and his family, of course*’) stance and those who see us all as the proverbial ‘bees in a hive’ and members of one body.

The best answers saw Mr Birling’s point – that his duty to his company was to keep labour costs as low as possible but at the same time deplored his refusal to meet Eva Smith halfway. These answers often went on to link this refusal with a second refusal – that of taking any responsibility for anything that happened to Eva Smith after he sacked her. This was often linked back to his bombastic dismissals of the whole notion of community. Mrs Birling received similar disdain: the notion that the awarding of subsistence charity should depend on whether applicants fits some sort of notion of being “deserving” being considered nasty as well as ignorant. Gerald was discussed in depth: his initial impulse may have been dutiful towards a terrified young woman being mauled by an aggressive drunk, but his subsequent actions betrayed his duty of fidelity to Sheila. A few candidates also noted that the effrontery of his second offering to Sheila of the engagement ring showed that, like Mr and Mrs Birling, he had learned nothing about duty. Inspector Goole was often used as a spine for better answers with

quotations from his various pertinent sayings throughout the play used to link the characters references, as well as his peroration near the end. Eva Smith, too, was used as connecting link in many good answers.

Overall, as seen in previous series, and as seen in responses to other questions on this paper, AO1 tended to be stronger, with many of the responses needing more focus on AO2 to achieve a higher mark. There were also some narrative responses, providing a plot summary relating to events of the play, instead of drawing out appropriate points linked to the focus of the question.

Here is an example of a response which uses contextual reference to support AO1:

‘As the play was set in 1912, gender inequality was a common issue among society. The audience can see this through Gerald and Sheila’s relationship. When Gerald finally proposes to her, Sheila asks him ‘Is this the ring you wanted me to have?’ The question emphasises is her lack of control or free will in the relationship with every choice relying on her fiancé Gerald. The word ‘want’ also emphasises Gerald’s social position and pressure that is put on Sheila to do her duty by conforming with her father’s wishes and the marriage she must endure in order to determine her future. The imbalance in their relationship emphasises to the 1945 audience that gender equality is important to the growth of society, one of J B Priestley’s messages in his play about social reform.’

Here is an example of a response which successfully integrates AO2 analysis into the arguments made:

‘Priestley uses Inspector Goole as a mouthpiece to express his personal opinions and share his moral values with the audience. One instance of this is when the Inspector starts to question Mr Birling saying phrases like ‘It’s my duty to ask questions’. He counters Mr Birling’s defensive response with the possessive pronoun ‘my’. In the power struggle between the two men, the Inspector shows control and the ability to influence the situation. The inspector displays a contrast between him and Mr Birling through being able to take responsibility of his duty while Mr Birling cannot. Another phrase that the Inspector uses is: ‘Rich people don’t just have privileges, they also have responsibilities’ but with the wealth that Mr Birling has he clearly does not think he has a duty towards the lower classes, which is another of Priestley’s moral messages.’

Question 4

In what ways does Priestley present Eric Birling in the play?

Candidates who chose to write about Eric Birling recognised his complex ‘half shy-half-assertive’ character and how his character develops from the socially awkward overgrown adolescent we see at the very beginning of the play to the more assertive, politicized young man who is present after the inspector’s departure. Nearly all answers were well-grounded in the text with abundant use of quotations, but it was less common to see answers that considered the character as a dramatic construction of the author’s deliberate intent, carrying symbolic value. References to Eric’s speeches and the stage directions led to good analysis of language, form and structure and the responses to this question showed good personal engagement and a

critical style. Completely linear, narrative answers that merely told the story from Eric's point of view were comparatively rare.

Here is a response which considers the way dialogue is used to denote character development. This is integrated analysis of AO2:

'In the play of 'An Inspector Calls' Priestley uses different dialogue as Eric Birling starts to mature in his outlook. At first, we can see that he is presented as a child who is interrupted by his father but later, he shows that he realises how society works from the line: 'It isn't as if you can go and work somewhere else'. We can see that Eric is trying to make a statement about people that weren't in their hierarchy. It would be very hard for people like Eva Smith to find a job and survive. If she decided to quit her job, there would be hardly any chance for her to find another job due to the lack of opportunity for the lower class. The statement is then supported when Eric says his father could have kept her on instead of throwing her out. This again deepens the questioning of how patriarchy works and how Eric is maturing in his outlook by standing up to his father and siding with the Inspector in his own house.'

This response is effective in considering the use of dramatic techniques and the effect on the audience, recognising the play as a performance:

'Eric is shown by Priestley as representing the younger generation when he questions his father about the war. When his father denies the possibility of war Priestley creates dramatic irony as the audience knows what has happened. They realise that Eric is more open to the truth highlighting the closed mindedness of the older generation. The younger generation are seen as more open minded, and this shows their ability to change and take responsibility. Priestley is critiquing society and the split between generations, showing that the social hierarchy was going to change. People like Mr Birling were going to get a shock when the Titanic sank and the Second World War began which is a symbolic of their impending downfall in the play.'

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time

Question 5

'Christopher finds it difficult to trust anybody.'

Discuss the theme of trust in *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time*.

There were no responses to this question.

Question 6

How is Judy Boone presented in the play?

There were no responses to this question.

Kindertransport

Question 7

'Strong feelings of unhappiness are shown throughout the play.'

Explore the theme of distress in *Kindertransport*.

There were no responses to this question.

Question 8: In what ways is Lil presented as a character who acts with good intentions in the play?

There were no responses to this question.

Death and the King's Horseman

Question 9 Death and the King's Horseman

How far do you agree with the view that Elesin is presented as courageous in the play?

There were no responses to this question.

Question 10 'The Yoruba have very different beliefs to those of the Pilkingses and their staff.'

Discuss the significance of different beliefs in *Death and the King's Horseman*.

There were no responses to this question

NB: Examples of responses to questions 1,2,5,6,7, 8,9 and 10 can be found in the ERA report for the main paper 4ET1 02R.

SECTION B - MODERN DRAMA

Romeo and Juliet

Question 11

Explore the role of Mercutio in Romeo and Juliet.

There were very few responses to this question but those candidates who answered it made some good arguments about the role of Mercutio and how he is both a source of humour and a catalyst for violence. Mercutio's role was considered in a number of different ways, candidates often concentrating as much on his dramatic function as his characterisation. Most candidates focused on the well-known scenes and virtually everyone considered Mercutio's advice to Romeo regarding the roughness of love, and his duel with Tybalt. There were a lot of very good explorations of the 'Queen Mab' speech and how this showed off his eloquence and sensitivity despite his hot-headed behaviour. His comedic interplay with the nurse was rarely written about, even by the many that acknowledged his function as comic relief. Better responses noted that the tone of the play switched exclusively to the tragic once the dying Mercutio declared 'a plague on both your houses'.

AO1 tended to be stronger than AO2 and AO4 which led to some imbalanced responses which were kept in Level 3. Better responses linked analysis of language and form to strengthen their argument and made contextual points about the role of parents and the restrictions of the patriarchal society at that time

Question 12

'Love triumphs over hate in the play.'

How far do you agree with this view?

Again, there were very few responses to this question. This question generally led to good discussion and a range of examples from the play were used for support. Well-selected references enabled candidates to analyse language, form and structure effectively. Contextual knowledge regarding societal behaviour and violence as part of Italian culture was clear in most responses. A number of candidates limited their response by concentrating exclusively on Romeo and Juliet's love affair and not spending enough time discussing how it overcame the hatred. Weaker responses lapsed into a narrative approach, considering the hatred shown in the brawl between the servants in the first scene and then telling the story of Romeo trying to remove himself from it by marrying Juliet and focusing on love. However, many top-level responses were seen in answer to this question and some astute candidates argued that love did not really triumph as the play ended with the young lovers taking their own lives.

Macbeth

Question 13

In what ways is the weather significant in the play?

Although *Macbeth* was by far the most popular text chosen for study, this was not a popular question. The few candidates who chose it made convincing arguments about the effects of the weather and linked ideas with the disruption by Macbeth of the natural order in his killing of the king. Many referred to the Old Man's speech about the unruly night when Duncan was

killed. Several responses focused on the power of the Witches in being able to control the weather. Better candidates focused on pathetic fallacy with thunder and lightning symbolising the unrest to come and the darkness on the night of Duncan's murder signifying the deception and evil being carried out.

For AO4, candidates made a number of different points on context. The more successful responses fully integrated these points throughout, supporting the points made in relation to AO1 and AO2.

Here is an example of a response which effectively combines AO4 context with AO2 analysis of dramatic techniques in the opening paragraph:

'In Act one we are first introduced to the deceptive characters of the witches with 'Thunder and lightning. Enter three Witches'. The simple stage direction is used to foreshadow the evil nature of the witches. It is the use of pathetic fallacy to set the mood early in the play to show us that the Witches have the power to make something bad happen. The audience will already dislike and fear the witches in the Jacobean era because they were superstitious. Shakespeare uses descriptions of the change in the weather when Duncan is murdered to mirror the change in the Chain of Being or natural order. In this way William Shakespeare has managed to present to the audience a sense of supernatural which shadows the play as it descends into tragedy. The belief of the people in the supernatural in the 1600s was also shared by the king who was fascinated and obsessed with the idea of witches and witchcraft. By showing the witches in such dark and extreme weather, Shakespeare has managed to confirm the king's fear and the danger associated with witchcraft. The ability of the witches to change the weather shows the power that they have over everything including the events of the play.'

Question 14

'A number of characters in the play show that they will do anything in order to get what they want.'

Discuss the presentation of one determined character in *Macbeth*.

This was the most popular question on the paper. Determination was covered through a range of characters, but with Macbeth featuring most often, followed by Lady Macbeth and then Macduff. Some candidates spoke about the determination shown by the Witches in bringing on the downfall of Macbeth. Most responses were well developed and linked determination to the theme of ambition. Candidates considered how language was used effectively, quoting from the soliloquies of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth's 'Unsex me' speech but found form and structure more difficult to manage. Context was usually dealt with in terms of King James and his interest in the supernatural and the Divine Right of kings. Some responses spent too much time on context with still quite a few references being bolted on as a historical or biographical introduction rather than being integrated and made relevant to the question. Quotations were generally appropriate but sometimes overlong.

As with responses to other questions this series (and as seen in previous series), there was some imbalance in focus on the different assessment objectives, with the focus on AO1 tending to be stronger. There were some good examples of references to context being intertwined throughout responses but there were also some responses which did not refer to context at all, or did so in a general way, not specifically linked to the focus of the question. Those responses awarded marks in the higher levels were able to successfully

integrate points related to context throughout, as support and development for AO1 and AO2.

Here is an example of an assured response which successfully integrates all three AOs:

‘At the start of the play Lady Macbeth is presented to the audience as a determined character through her dialogue. When we are first introduced to her, she invites the evil spirits to enter her body to give her more strength: ‘Fill me top to toe with direst cruelty’. She also calls her husband on his return from battle ‘my dearest partner in greatness’. The superlative highlights her determination to get Macbeth on her side and convince him to commit the murder. When she calls him a ‘partner’ this shows how she feels she is equal to him, which would be unfamiliar to a Jacobean audience in a patriarchal society.

Lady Macbeth later uses the metaphor ‘milk of human kindness’ which symbolises how she believes Macbeth is too kind to do anything evil such as regicide without her pushing him. Milk is a symbol of purity and innocence which Lady Macbeth destroys because of her determination.

In act 4 scene 2 Macbeth’s murder of Macduff’s family shows his determination to keep the crown once he has it. The murderers’ use of ‘what you egg!’ to describe Macduff’s son’s useless defiance shows bird imagery which was used earlier in the play to suggest the calmness of Duncan on entering Macbeth’s castle. Here it could represent Macduff’s young child and his fragility. It could also suggest the hope that has been lost after the murder of Duncan has taken place.

Later during the rising action Macbeth shows his determination to possess the King’s coveted throne. After hearing the news of Macduff’s departure, he says: ‘let not light see my black and deep desires’. The imperative suggests that now he sets his sights on the throne he will not back down. The adjectives ‘black’ and ‘deep’ both have plosives which give the confession an evil and sinister tone. Light in the Jacobean time would be a symbol of God and its use suggests that Macbeth has realised that he has turned his back on heaven in his maskless determination to seek power.’

The Merchant of Venice

Question 15

How far do you agree with the view that Portia is presented as an independent woman in the play?

There were no responses to this question.

Question 16

**‘Shylock enters the bond to seek revenge for the hatred shown towards him.’
Explore the significance of hatred in *The Merchant of Venice*’.**

There were no responses to this question.

Pride and Prejudice

Question 17

Explore the character of Charlotte Lucas in *Pride and Prejudice*

There were no responses to this question.

Question 18

How does Austen present the importance of different settings in the novel?

There were no responses to this question.

Great Expectations

Question 19

‘There are many examples of unfair treatment in the novel.’

Explore the theme of injustice in *Great Expectations*.

There were no responses to this question.

Question 20

How is the relationship between Pip and Miss Havisham presented in the novel?

There were no responses to this question.

The Scarlet Letter

Question 21

‘For much of the novel, responsibility for doing wrong is not shared.’

Explore the theme of blame in *The Scarlet Letter*.

There were no responses to this question.

Question 22

How is the character of Pearl presented in the novel?

There were no responses to this question.

NB: Examples of responses to the texts set for questions 15,16,17, 18, 19, 20, 21 and 22 can be found in the ERA report for the main paper 4ET1 02R.

Top Tips

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

General points:

- 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).

Section A:

- 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:
 - to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the text
 - to maintain a critical style
 - to 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 genre of the text
 - the physical organisation of the text, including stage directions
 - use of prose / verse / dialogue

- narrative techniques (for a novel), dramatic techniques (for a play)
- 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.

Section B:

- 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 o 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.