



Rewarding Learning

ADVANCED
General Certificate of Education
2024

English Literature
Assessment Unit A2 1
assessing
Shakespearean Genres
[AEL11]
WEDNESDAY 22 MAY, MORNING

MARK
SCHEME

General Marking Instructions

Introduction

The main purpose of a mark scheme is to ensure that examinations are marked accurately, consistently and fairly. The mark scheme provides examiners with an indication of the nature and range of candidates' responses likely to be worthy of credit. It also sets out the criteria which they should apply in allocating marks to candidates' responses.

Assessment Objectives

Below are the assessment objectives for GCE English Literature.

Candidates should be able to:

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

Quality of candidates' responses

In marking the examination papers, examiners should be looking for a quality of response reflecting the level of maturity which may reasonably be expected of a 17- or 18-year-old which is the age at which the majority of candidates sit their GCE examinations.

Flexibility in marking

Mark schemes are not intended to be totally prescriptive. No mark scheme can cover all the responses which candidates may produce. In the event of unanticipated answers, examiners are expected to use their professional judgement to assess the validity of answers. If an answer is particularly problematic, then examiners should seek the guidance of the Supervising Examiner.

Positive marking

Examiners are encouraged to be positive in their marking, giving appropriate credit for what candidates know, understand and can do rather than penalising candidates for errors or omissions. Examiners should make use of the whole of the available mark range for any particular question and be prepared to award full marks for a response which is as good as might reasonably be expected of a 17- or 18-year-old GCE candidate.

Awarding zero marks

Marks should only be awarded for valid responses and no marks should be awarded for an answer which is completely incorrect or inappropriate.

Bands of response

In deciding which level of response to award, examiners should look for the 'best fit'. In deciding which mark within a particular band to award to any response, examiners are expected to use their professional judgement.

The following guidance is provided to assist examiners.

- ***Threshold performance:*** Response which just merits inclusion in the band and should be awarded a mark at or near the bottom of the range.
- ***Intermediate performance:*** Response which clearly merits inclusion in the band and should be awarded a mark at or near the middle of the range.
- ***High performance:*** Response which fully satisfies the band description and should be awarded a mark at or near the top of the range.

Quality of written communication

Quality of written communication is taken into account in assessing candidates' responses to all tasks and questions and is assessed under AO1.

Advice to Examiners

1 Description v Argumentation

Answers which consist of simple narration or description as opposed to the argumentation required by AO5 should not be rewarded beyond Band 1. From Band 3 upwards you will find scripts indicating increasing ability to engage with the precise terms of the question and to construct a relevant argument. Top Band answers will address key terms in an explicit and sustained way.

2 Key Terms/Issues

Candidates must take account of key terms and structure their answers accordingly if they are to be relevant and properly focused. Key terms and the relationships amongst them are of two distinct kinds: those which are in **directives** (examples will be provided from the current examination paper) and those which are included in the question's stimulus statement (examples will be provided from the current examination paper).

3 Assessment Objectives for A2 1

- (a) **AO1** This globalising objective emphasises three essential qualities:
- (i) knowledge and understanding of the text.
 - (ii) the coherent organisation of material in response to the question;
 - (iii) communication appropriate to literary studies (which is also reflected in the paper's general rubric: "Quality of written communication will be assessed");
- (b) **AO2** This objective requires candidates to **identify, illustrate** and **explore** such dramatic methods as form, structure, language (including imagery) and tone, and staging. Candidates who offer no consideration of methods cannot be rewarded beyond a mark of **30**. Candidates who offer only a limited consideration of methods cannot be rewarded beyond a mark of **40**.
- (c) **AO3** No specific sources are prescribed or recommended. Nevertheless, as the given readings of the text address an issue of Shakespearean genres, candidates will be expected to provide appropriate information from outside the text. Such information must be applied to the terms of the question. Little credit should be given for contextual information that is introduced merely for its own sake. Candidates who demonstrate significant strengths in AO1 and AO2 and AO5 but who provide no external contextual information cannot be rewarded beyond a mark of **30**. Candidates who demonstrate significant strengths in AO1 and AO2 and AO5 but who provide only limited external contextual information cannot be rewarded beyond a mark of **40**. "Limited" contextual information would include: simple assertions and generalisation; or contextual information that is not completely relevant (but could have been argued into relevance).
- (d) **AO4** This objective requires candidates to make relevant links between the extract and the wider text.
- (e) **AO5** This objective is the driver of A2 1 and requires candidates to respond to a stimulus statement which expresses a particular reading of the play by constructing a coherent and cogent argument. AO5 will be the main determinant of the final mark awarded in the assessment of this unit.

4 **Derived Material**

Although heavily derivative work is less likely to be found in “closed book” examinations, it may still appear in the form of work which shows signs of being substantially derived from editors’ “Introductions” and “Notes” and/or from teachers’ notes. Evidence of close dependence on such aids may include (a) the repetition of the same ideas or phrases from a particular centre or from candidates using the same edition of a text and (b) oblique or irrelevant responses to the questions. Such evidence cannot always be easily spotted, however, and candidates must be given the benefit of the doubt. Examiners should also distinguish between the uses to which such derived material is put. Where the candidate has integrated short pieces of derived material **relevantly** into her/his argument, marks should not be withheld. On the other hand, credit cannot be given for large sections of material regurgitated by the candidate even when they are relevant.

5 **Unsubstantiated Assertions**

In all answers, candidates are expected to provide convincing textual evidence in the form of close reference and/or apt quotation for their comments. Unsupported generalisation should not be rewarded. Reference to other critical opinions should include sufficient information to indicate that the candidate understands the point s/he is citing.

6 **Use of Quotation**

Obviously, use of quotation will be more secure in “open book” than in “closed book” examinations, although short, apt and mostly accurate quotation will be expected in A2 1. Quotations should be appropriately selected and woven into the main body of the discussion. Proper conventions governing the introduction, punctuation and layout of quotations should be observed, with particular regard to the candidates’ smooth and syntactically appropriate combining of the quotation with their own words.

7 **Observance of Rubric**

You should always ensure that candidates observe the rubric of each question and of the paper as a whole.

8 **Length of Answers**

Length does not always mean quality. Some lengthy answers are thorough and interesting, others repetitive and contain much irrelevant and/or unrelated material. On the other hand, some brief answers may be scrappy while others are cogent and incisive.

9 **Answers in Note Form**

Some answers may degenerate into notes or may, substantially, take the form of notes. Do not assume that notes are automatically worthless. Look at them carefully. Some notes are better than others.

The use of notes will generally mean that the candidate has failed to construct a properly developed and coherent argument, but they may contain creditable insights or raise pertinent points, however inadequately developed these insights or points may be. If in doubt, contact the Supervising Examiner.

10 **Uneven Performance**

While a response may begin badly, it may improve as it develops. Read all of each answer carefully and do not let obvious weaknesses blind you to strengths displayed elsewhere in the answer.

11 **Implicit/Explicit**

Examiners are strongly urged to mark what is **on the page** rather than what they think the candidate might mean. Do not attempt to do the work for the candidate to justify a higher mark than is actually earned. The argument that something is **implicit** in the answer is extremely unreliable as what may appear to be implicit to one examiner may not appear so to another.

Mark Grid A2 Unit 1 (The Study of Shakespearean Genres)

Mark	AO	General characteristics	How to arrive at the mark
Band 5 41–50 Assured, excellent, perceptive ‘ Assured ’: confident, controlled, judiciously selective, highly developed sense of audience and purpose ‘ Excellent ’: highly developed literary skills ‘ Perceptive ’: creative	AO1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> excellent knowledge and understanding excellent sense of order excellent level of expression 	At the top of the band, responses will be cogent and sophisticated.
	AO2	assured and perceptive comments on methods linked convincingly to the key terms	At the bottom of the band, responses will be confidently organised and fluent, showing a detailed and thorough understanding of the text.
	AO3	assured and perceptive comments on external context	
	AO4	makes connections in an assured way	
	AO5	assured and sophisticated reasoning/interpretation in relation to the key terms	
Band 4 31–40 Coherent, secure and consistent ‘ Coherent and secure ’: a response to the key terms which demonstrates clarity and integration in the handling of literary material ‘ Consistent ’: maintains focus on all aspects of the task	AO1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> secure knowledge and understanding secure sense of order coherent level of expression 	At the top of the band, responses will connect with the key terms in a consistently relevant way, showing articulation and a well-developed understanding of the text.
	AO2	coherent and secure comments on methods linked clearly to the key terms	At the bottom of the band, responses will connect with the key terms in a mostly relevant way, showing secure understanding of the text and clarity of expression.
	AO3	coherent and secure comments on external context	
	AO4	makes secure connections	
	AO5	coherent and consistent attempts at reasoning/interpretation with clear sense of relevance to the key terms	
Band 3b 26–30 Increasingly purposeful/Competent ‘ Increasingly purposeful/Competent ’: a fairly developed and controlled response to the key terms and other aspects of the task	AO1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> competent knowledge and understanding competent sense of order competent level of expression 	At the top of the band, responses will make some purposeful and relevant attempts to connect with the key terms (these attempts may not be sustained or consistent).
	AO2	increasingly purposeful comments on methods with explanations linked competently to the key terms	
	AO3	increasingly purposeful comments on external context	
	AO4	makes competent connections	
	AO5	competent attempts at reasoning/interpretation with competent sense of relevance to the key terms	

Mark	AO	General characteristics	How to arrive at the mark
Band 3a 21–25 Limited ‘Limited’: a more deliberate engagement with the key terms and other aspects of the task	AO1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> developing knowledge and understanding limited sense of order limited level of expression 	At the bottom of the band, responses will engage more deliberately with the key terms but with limited development and understanding. At the top of the band, responses will make basic attempts to connect with the key terms; the response will be expressed with basic clarity and intermittent relevance. At the bottom of the band, responses will make reference to the key terms with a little understanding. The writing will be occasionally relevant. At the top of the band, responses will make some unconnected points in relation to the text; the response will lack clarity. At the bottom of the band, responses will have no connection with the text; the writing will be hard to follow and irrelevant.
	AO2	limited attempt to relate comments on methods to key terms	
	AO3	limited comments on external context	
	AO4	makes limited connections	
	AO5	limited attempts at reasoning/interpretation with limited sense of relevance to the key terms	
Band 2 11–20 Basic/A little awareness ‘Basic’: assertive, undeveloped, superficial, partially understood, generalised ‘A little awareness’: a vague/simplistic sense of the key terms	AO1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> basic knowledge and understanding of the text basic sense of order basic level of expression 	
	AO2	a little awareness of methods	
	AO3	a little awareness of external context	
	AO4	may make basic connections	
	AO5	basic attempt at reasoning with basic sense of relevance to the key terms	
Band 1 1–10 Mostly irrelevant/Mostly misunderstood/Mostly inaccurate ‘Mostly irrelevant’: general comments about the text but without conscious identification of the task ‘Mostly misunderstood’ and ‘Mostly inaccurate’: knowledge of the text is insecure/incorrect	AO1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> mostly irrelevant lack of knowledge incoherence writes with very little clarity or accuracy 	
	AO2	very little understanding of methods	
	AO3	very little understanding of external context	
	AO4	very little ability to make connections	
	AO5	very little ability to engage with the key terms	
Band 0 0		No attempt to respond	

1 *Othello*

Othello is not noble enough to be considered a tragic hero.

By referring closely to extract 1, printed in the accompanying Resource Booklet and to other appropriately selected parts of the text, **show to what extent** you would agree with the view expressed above.

Your **argument** should include relevant comments on Shakespeare's dramatic methods, and relevant external contextual information on the nature of Shakespearean Tragedy.

N.B. Equal marks are available for your treatment of the given extract and other relevant parts of the text.

The following mark scheme should be applied in conjunction with the A2 1 Shakespearean Genres Mark Band Grid and the following table:

[0]	NONE
[1]–[10]	LITTLE UNDERSTANDING
[11]–[20]	BASIC
[21]–[25]	LIMITED
[26]–[30]	INCREASINGLY PURPOSEFUL
[31]–[40]	COHERENT
[41]–[50]	ASSURED

The information below is intended to **exemplify** the type of content you may see in responses. Reference should be made to some of the following points, and all other valid comments will be rewarded.

Responses should demonstrate the following:

AO1: Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression.

Answers should contain:

- knowledge and understanding of the play in appropriate reference and quotation
- order and relevance in conveying ideas
- appropriate and accurate expression
- appropriate use of literary terminology
- skilful and meaningful insertion of quotation.

AO5: Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.

This **driving objective** will require the candidate to:

- take due account of the key terms of the question, examining the relationship between them, i.e., “**Othello**”, “**not noble enough**”, “**tragic hero**”
- offer opinion or judgment in response to the given reading of the text
- make an attempt at reasoning in support of his/her opinion
- provide textual referencing to illustrate his/her opinion
- show awareness of other readings than that expressed in the stimulus statement, e.g. that **qualities such as his sense of honour and powers of imagination might entitle Othello to be considered noble.**

In addition to the extract, some situations which may be found useful in considering this question are:

- Othello’s interactions with Brabantio in which he demonstrates respect for his accuser
- Cassio’s clear devotion to Othello as they wait for his arrival in Cyprus
- Othello’s interactions with Iago in which he demonstrates a level of gullibility which may not be considered noble
- Othello’s mistreatment of Desdemona
- the murder of Desdemona and the speeches of Othello which follow

AO2: Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts.

Candidates should **identify** and **explore** aspects of Shakespeare’s dramatic methods in relation to the key terms of the question.

Extract

- use of a question-and-answer structure (“Did you by indirect and forced courses/Subdue and poison this young maid’s affections?”; “Say it, Othello”) in which Othello honestly and respectfully complies with the Council’s investigation, presenting him as a noble character
- use of a simile in which Othello compares his honesty to the Council to his truthfulness before God (“as truly as to heaven/I do confess the vices of my blood,/So justly to your grave ears I’ll present/How I did thrive in this fair lady’s love”) which presents him as demonstrating deference and a noble modesty – is this sufficient for a tragic hero?
- use of a long list of his exploits (e.g. “Of being taken by the insolent foe/And sold to slavery, of my redemption thence,/And portance in my travel’s history”) where Othello reveals his determination to live up to his own standards, which may be argued to display a nobility of character worthy of the tragic hero
- use of allusions to contemporary travellers’ tales and to the classical author Pliny’s accounts of cannibalism (“the Cannibals that each other eat,/The Anthropophagi and men whose heads/Do grow beneath their shoulders”) to present Othello’s exceptionality as a noble pioneer whose stature makes it possible for him to be considered a tragic hero
- use of metaphor (“She’ld come again, and with a greedy ear/Devour up my discourse”) to present Othello as a compelling and charismatic character, qualities which could be regarded as noble and associated with the exceptionality of the tragic hero
- use of irony in Othello’s response to Brabantio’s charge that he had used spells to bewitch Desdemona (“This [the narrative of his adventures] only is the witchcraft I have used”) to present calm and reasoned assertion of a noble, moral rectitude which will be destroyed in his tragic fall

Wider Text

- use of stage action: (the entrance of the Herald to read “the noble general” Othello’s proclamation) to present Othello as authoritative and compelling, establishing qualities which are integral to the idea of the tragic hero
- repeated use of positive epithets (“valiant Othello”; “brave Othello”; “worthy Othello”) to establish a view of Othello as a noble character of tragic stature
- use of a succession of questions as Iago’s manipulation begins (“What dost thou say?”, “Who is’t you mean?”, “Went he hence now?”) initiates Othello’s loss of composure — a complete contrast to his earlier calm self-possession — and his newfound reliance on his servant, an erosion of authority which detracts from his nobility and marks the beginning of his tragic fall
- repeated use of dramatic irony in relation to Othello’s view of Iago (“This fellow’s of exceeding honesty”; “honest Iago”) which presents Othello’s gullibility and loss of dignity, detracting from his tragic stature
- use of paradox (“I think my wife be honest, and think she is not;/I think that thou art just, and think thou art not”) which may present Othello’s tragic suffering or may present the erosion of his previously displayed noble qualities

- use of a series of accusatory epithets (“Are not you a strumpet?”, “What, not a whore?”, “I took you for that cunning whore of Venice/That married with Othello”) to suggest the depravity into which a once-noble mind has fallen
- repeated use of apocalyptic images (“blow me about in winds, roast me in sulphur/Wash me in...gulfs of liquid fire!”) alongside stage action (“he stabs himself”) may be argued to suggest Othello’s ignoble self-absorption and lack of tragic enlightenment

AO3: Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received.

The nature of Shakespearean Tragedy:

- inevitable doom is at the heart of Aristotelian tragedy, though in Shakespearean tragedy character plays a more prominent part
- the hero of classical tragedy is usually of high status with noble qualities in order to emphasise the extent of the tragic fall
- the tragic hero is in possession of a trait which is simultaneously something that makes him great, and the flaw that becomes his downfall
- the tragic fall (peripeteia)
- attainment of tragic knowledge (anagnorisis) on the part of the tragic hero
- purgation or moderation of pity and terror, thus allowing the audience a sense of relief and exaltation, whereby they are reconciled to the nature and limitation of their human condition
- inclusion of a sentimental or pathetic element in Shakespearean tragedy which is rarely seen in Greek tragedy, e.g. Lady Macduff in *Macbeth*, Ophelia in *Hamlet*, Cordelia in *King Lear*

AO4: Explore connections across and within literary texts.

The stimulus statement should be explored both in the extract and throughout the play.

2 *King Lear*

It is difficult to pity the tragic hero Lear.

By referring closely to extract 2, printed in the accompanying Resource Booklet and to other appropriately selected parts of the text, **show to what extent** you would agree with the view expressed above.

Your **argument** should include relevant comments on Shakespeare's dramatic methods, and relevant external contextual information on the nature of Shakespearean Tragedy.

N.B. Equal marks are available for your treatment of the given extract and other relevant parts of the text.

The following mark scheme should be applied in conjunction with the A2 1 Shakespearean Genres Mark Band Grid and the following table:

[0]	NONE
[1]–[10]	LITTLE UNDERSTANDING
[11]–[20]	BASIC
[21]–[25]	LIMITED
[26]–[30]	INCREASINGLY PURPOSEFUL
[31]–[40]	COHERENT
[41]–[50]	ASSURED

The information below is intended to **exemplify** the type of content you may see in responses. Reference should be made to some of the following points, and all other valid comments will be rewarded.

Responses should demonstrate the following:

AO1: Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression.

Answers should contain:

- knowledge and understanding of the play in appropriate reference and quotation
- order and relevance in conveying ideas
- appropriate and accurate expression
- appropriate use of literary terminology
- skilful and meaningful insertion of quotation.

AO5: Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.

This **driving objective** will require the candidate to:

- take due account of the key terms of the question, examining the relationship between them, i.e., “**difficult**”, “**pity**”, “**tragic hero Lear**”
- offer opinion or judgement in response to the given reading of the text
- make an attempt at reasoning in support of his/her opinion
- provide textual referencing to illustrate his/her opinion

- show awareness of other readings than that expressed in the stimulus statement, e.g. that **the degree of suffering which Lear must endure evokes feelings of pity for him.**

In addition to the extract, some situations which may be found useful in considering this question are:

- Lear’s egotism in Act I
- Lear’s disputes with Goneril and Regan
- Lear’s sufferings on the heath
- Lear and Cordelia’s interactions in the latter stages of the action

AO2: Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts.

Candidates should **identify** and **explore** aspects of Shakespeare’s dramatic methods in relation to the key terms of the question.

Extract

- use of metaphor (“The bow is bent and drawn. Make from the shaft”) to convey the extent of Lear’s egotism and intransigence which renders pity an irrelevance at this point in the tragic arc
- use of personification (“When power to flattery bows”) to present Lear (power) as willing to humiliate himself through submission to the whims of his children, Goneril and Regan (flattery), a characterisation of Lear which may or may not evoke feelings of pity
- use of metaphor (“When majesty falls to folly”) as Kent warns against a situation in which Lear might become pitiable
- use of contrast between Kent’s selfless declaration of loyalty (“My life I never held but as a pawn / To wage against thine enemies”) as opposed to Lear’s callous rejection (“Out of my sight!”), a contrast which removes any possibility of pity at this point in the tragedy of Lear
- use of motif of sight in extract and wider text (“See better, Lear”) to emphasise Lear’s flawed appreciation of the fragility of his situation: Kent’s warning may evoke a degree of pity for Lear
- use of admonitory echoing in Kent’s retort (“Now, by Apollo”) to highlight the irony of Lear’s unfortunate invocation of a god traditionally associated with clear-sightedness may, given the precarious nature of his situation, engender a degree of pity for Lear
- repeated use of abusive epithets (“O vassal!”, “Miscreant!”, “Hear me, recreant”) to convey Lear’s angry repudiation of Kent’s percipient interventions, an unyielding response unlikely to evoke pity
- use of stage action (*Laying his hand on his sword*) to suggest the violence of Lear’s anger at being opposed by Kent which would exclude pity at this moment
- use of metaphor (“Kill thy physician, and thy fee bestow/Upon the foul disease”): helpful advice is being spurned and Lear is courting disaster by aligning himself with ugliness and evil – Lear’s perversity is unlikely to attract pity

Wider Text

- use of pejorative epithets (“mongrel”, “slave”, “degenerate bastard”) in Lear’s peremptory, hubristic assumption of power in Goneril’s household may make it difficult to pity him
- use of similes (“...this our court .../Shows like a riotous inn: epicurism and lust/Makes it more like a tavern or brothel/Than a graced palace”) in Goneril’s description of the disorderly behaviour of Lear and his knights may make it impossible to pity him at this early stage of his tragic fall
- use of apostrophe (“Hear, Nature, hear!”) to solemnise Lear’s persistence in his tragic error (*hamartia*) in calling down a curse of sterility on his daughter makes it impossible to extend pity to him at this point
- use of symbolic stage action as Goneril and Regan join hands in determination to destroy their father may be seen as a moment when pity for Lear becomes possible

- use of an intensifying sequence as Lear’s tragic fall from power proceeds (confrontation with Goneril, with Regan, suffering in the storm, loss of Cordelia) is likely to be seen as making it gradually easier to pity Lear
- use of pathetic fallacy of the storm (“Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks!”) as the violence of the storm without mirrors the violent suffering within Lear, and the elements of the storm become allied (“servile ministers”) to the other forces ranged against him i.e. his daughters: this emphasises his isolation and may compel pity
- use of exhortation (“Let the great gods,/That keep this dreadful pudder o’er our heads,/Find out their enemies now”) as Lear begins his tragic enlightenment (*anagnorisis*) by becoming aware of the cosmic significance of his actions — pity (and/or fear) is aroused in the audience
- use of song and doggerel rhyme (“The hedge-sparrow fed the cuckoo so long,/That it had it head bit off by it young”, “Then shall the realm of Albion / Come to great confusion”, “The man that makes his toe/What he his heart should make / Shall have a corn cry woe,/And turn his sleep to wake”) in which The Fool offers a variety of piercing perspectives on Lear and his lack of judgement, suggesting the irregularity of his *anagnorisis* and hence the irregularity of the process by which he gains our pity
- use of costume (*Lear tearing off his clothes, fantastically dressed with wild flowers*) to indicate Lear’s pitiable distraction
- use of tableau (*Re-enter Lear, with Cordelia dead in his arms*) to convey the extent of Lear’s loss and the completion of the fall of the tragic hero from prosperity – at this point pity for Lear may be overwhelming

AO3: Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received.

The nature of Shakespearean Tragedy:

- flawed tragic hero who suffers immensely; the typical tragic flaw is hubris
- the tragic hero is usually of high status which magnifies the impact of his fall
- suffering will extend to other characters to magnify the impact on the audience, inviting the audience to simultaneously feel pity and recoil in terror that they too, could suffer in a similar way
- catastrophe is inevitable, despite *anagnorisis* and attempts to make reparation, increasing the terror of the spectacle
- suffering will be disproportionate to the flaw/*hamartia* of the tragic hero, evoking both pity and terror from the audience
- inclusion of a sentimental or pathetic element in Shakespearean tragedy which is rarely seen in Greek Tragedy, for example Lady MacDuff in *Macbeth*, Ophelia in *Hamlet*, Desdemona in *Othello*

AO4: Explore connections across literary texts.

The stimulus statement should be explored both in the extract and throughout the play.

3 *The Taming of the Shrew*

Lucentio and Bianca are deceivers.

By referring closely to extract **3**, printed in the accompanying Resource Booklet and to other appropriately selected parts of the text, **show to what extent** you would agree with the view expressed above.

Your **argument** should include relevant comments on Shakespeare's dramatic methods, and relevant external contextual information on the nature of Shakespearean Comedy.

N.B. Equal marks are available for your treatment of the given extract and other relevant parts of the text.

The following mark scheme should be applied in conjunction with the A2 1 Shakespearean Genres Mark Band Grid and the following table:

[0]	NONE
[1]–[10]	LITTLE UNDERSTANDING
[11]–[20]	BASIC
[21]–[25]	LIMITED
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The information below is intended to **exemplify** the type of content you may see in responses. Reference should be made to some of the following points, and all other valid comments will be rewarded.

Responses should demonstrate the following:

AO1: Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression.

Answers should contain:

- knowledge and understanding of the play in appropriate reference and quotation
- order and relevance in conveying ideas
- appropriate and accurate expression
- appropriate use of literary terminology
- skilful and meaningful insertion of quotation.

AO5: Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.

This **driving objective** will require the candidate to:

- take due account of the key terms of the question, examining the relationship between them, i.e. **“Lucentio”, “Bianca”, “deceivers”**
- offer opinion or judgement in response to the given reading of the text
- make an attempt at reasoning in support of his/her opinion
- provide textual referencing to illustrate his/her opinion

- show awareness of other readings than that expressed in the stimulus statement, e.g. that **while this may be true, deception (particularly of the old by the young) is frequent in comedy and not to be judged too harshly** or that **in the important matter of his love for Bianca, Lucentio is true throughout.**

In addition to the extract, some situations which may be found useful in considering the question are:

- Lucentio’s and Tranio’s simultaneous hatching of a plot to get Lucentio into the Minola household, and Lucentio’s lies to his servant Biondello about the reason for the exchange of clothes between Lucentio and Tranio
- Katherine’s opinion that Bianca is a liar may or may not be accepted
- Lucentio’s eager acceptance of Tranio’s scheme to produce a false father for him as a guarantor and passing him off as such to Baptista
- the clandestine marriage
- Bianca’s behaviour at the final banquet

AO2: Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts.

Candidates should **identify** and **explore** aspects of Shakespeare’s dramatic methods in relation to the key terms of the question.

Extract

- use of assumed names and disguises (Lucentio as Cambio and Hortensio as Licio): there is an obvious stratagem of deception on the Minola family by Lucentio
- use of Latin as a disguise in the conversation between Lucentio/Cambio and Bianca in order to deceive Hortensio/Licio into believing that a lesson is taking place
- use of derogatory epithet (“pantaloon”) by Lucentio/Cambio in speaking of Bianca’s father is tolerated by her, arguably making her complicit in the deception which he is practising on Baptista
- use of voice direction (variation of volume and/or whispering, selection of auditor) necessitated by the continuing deception of Hortensio/Licio in which Bianca takes part
- use of ambiguity, e.g. Bianca’s “I must believe my master”: if she means “my master in love”, this is a piece of implicit deception practised upon her father, and explicit deception on Hortensio/Licio
- second use of Latin provides opportunity for Bianca to respond to Lucentio’s/Cambio’s overtures, where her words “take heed he hear us not...despair not” are obviously designed to deceive Hortensio/Licio, and arguably also constitute a deception of her own father
- use of modal shift and verbal echoing to suggest a progression in Bianca’s receptivity to Lucentio’s overtures (“In time I may believe, yet I mistrust” to “I must believe my master”) constitutes an assurance by Bianca to Lucentio that his declaration of love has been welcomed – so deceiving Baptista, her father

Wider Text

- use of classical allusions and the stock comparisons of the poetry of courtly love (“sweet beauty in her face,/Such as the daughter of Agenor had.../I saw her coral lips to move/And with her breath she did perfume the air...”) to express Lucentio’s immediate love for Bianca – in which there is no deception unless it be self-deception
- use of reiteration of Bianca’s phrase (see extract) “master of your art” in the flirting scene with Lucentio, when Hortensio is convinced to abandon his courtship, may be considered a piece of deception on their part
- frequent use of dramatic irony as Baptista is deceived by the stratagems of Tranio and Lucentio, e.g. when Baptista sends the supposed Cambio home to collect Bianca, thus expediting the unapproved marriage
- use of smutty innuendo as Biondello encourages Lucentio to take possession of Bianca “*cum privilegio ad impremdum solem*” – the triumph of the deceitful plot
- use of a flurry of entrances and exits, ending with Lucentio (*kneeling*) admitting the deception to his father, Vincentio, and clarifying the confusion in traditional comedic fashion: “Love wrought these miracles”
- use of contrast between the words and behaviour of Bianca in the early scenes (“Maid’s mild behaviour and sobriety”, thinks Lucentio) and her abrasive behaviour to her husband (repetition of “fool”, “foolish”) at the final banquet may suggest that Lucentio has been deceived in his wife

AO3: Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received.

The nature of Shakespearean Comedy:

- love usually a central theme
- plot involves lovers overcoming obstacles to their happiness – these obstacles may be external or internal
- may feature some aspect of the ‘battle of the sexes’
- complex plots – may involve pairs of lovers
- may feature female characters disguised as boys
- often features strong and intelligent young heroines
- builds towards a happy ending, usually in marriage
- may feature lively or impertinent servants as part of a comic disordering of normality or stability
- may feature the tricking of the old by the young as part of the same disordering
- plot may rely on mistaken identity and/or disguise (disguise by a dramatic convention was held to be impenetrable)
- may feature various types of comedy – verbal, slapstick, caricature, social satire

AO4: Explore connections across and within literary texts.

The stimulus statement should be explored both in the extract and throughout the play.

4 *As You Like It*

Arden is a world of unreality.

By referring closely to extract 4, printed in the accompanying Resource Booklet and to other appropriately selected parts of the text, **show to what extent** you would agree with the view expressed above.

Your **argument** should include relevant comments on Shakespeare's dramatic methods, and relevant external contextual information on the nature of Shakespearean Comedy.

N.B. Equal marks are available for your treatment of the given extract and other relevant parts of the text.

The following mark scheme should be applied in conjunction with the A2 1 Shakespearean Genres Mark Band Grid and the following table:

[0]	NONE
[1]–[10]	LITTLE UNDERSTANDING
[11]–[20]	BASIC
[21]–[25]	LIMITED
[26]–[30]	INCREASINGLY PURPOSEFUL
[31]–[40]	COHERENT
[41]–[50]	ASSURED

The information below is intended to **exemplify** the type of content you may see in responses. Reference should be made to some of the following points, and all other valid comments will be rewarded.

Responses should demonstrate the following:

AO1: Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression.

Answers should contain:

- knowledge and understanding of the play in appropriate reference and quotation
- order and relevance in conveying ideas
- appropriate and accurate expression
- appropriate use of literary terminology
- skilful and meaningful insertion of quotation.

AO5: Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.

This **driving objective** will require the candidate to:

- take due account of the key terms of the question, examining the relationship between them, i.e. "**Arden**", "**world of unreality**"
- offer opinion or judgement in response to the given reading of the text
- make an attempt at reasoning in support of his/her opinion
- provide textual referencing to illustrate his/her opinion

- show awareness of other readings than that expressed in the stimulus statement, e.g. that **there are realistic elements in Arden, for example physical hardship and sexual exploitation** or that **the presentation of human feelings in Arden, for example Rosalind's fluctuating confidence, is realistic and convincing.**

In addition to the extract, some situations which may be found useful in considering this question are:

- Corin's words about life in the Forest
- Touchstone's unimpressed attitude to Arden
- the words and actions of a range of affected or disguised characters in the forest (e.g. Rosalind, Jaques, Silvius, Phoebe), all behaving in unnatural ways
- wonderful events in Arden (estranged brothers reconciled, wild beasts, conversions, the odds made even at the end of the play)
- the range of attitudes to love, some exalted and idealistic, some basely realistic

AO2: Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts.

Candidates should **identify** and **explore** aspects of Shakespeare's dramatic methods in relation to the key terms of the question.

Extract

- staging: use of disguise whereby Rosalind is enabled to pass as a man even with those who know her intimately may be argued to be both part of the unreality of the Arden world, and a part of the suspension of disbelief necessary for the enjoyment of the play
- use of term of greeting ("fair sister") by Oliver continues a process in which he (and others) threaten but do not quite manage to break through the convention of the disguise: Arden as a world of unreality under her control remains intact — just
- use of contrast between Rosalind's fanciful and rather weak word-play ("Heart"/hart) and the literalism of Orlando's reply ("It is my arm"), emphasising her nimbleness and high spirits and his dimness suggests that Arden is a world where the gender power-balance has been subverted, normality has been disordered, and reality stood on its head
- use of simile, albeit worded in an unconventional way ("never a thing so sudden, but the fight of two rams") and of classical allusion ("Caesar's thrasonical brag") to express the instantaneous falling in love of Oliver and Aliena: the world of Arden is distant from reality in both this suddenness and the reversal in Oliver's character
- use of repetition: five-fold incidence of "no sooner...but" to convey vividly the speed of the falling in love which confirms Arden as a world of unreality
- use of bawdy word-play in the rapidly successive use of "incontinent" for two differing meanings and in the double-entendre of "tomorrow I cannot serve your turn for Rosalind?" offers a realistic counterbalance to some of the elevated views of love in the world of Arden
- use of exclamation ("But O, how bitter a thing it is to look into happiness through another man's eyes!") conveys Orlando's struggle with envy as he considers Oliver's happiness in a way which is psychologically convincing: this might be used in an argument for the realism with which human emotions in Arden are at times presented
- use of metaphor ("I know into what straits of fortune she is driven") by which Ganymede convinces Orlando of 'his' intimate knowledge of Rosalind, persuading him into acceptance of a fantastical story (i.e. of 'his' association with the "magician, most profound in his art") and that Arden is indeed a world of the unreal

Wider Text

- use of allusions to English folk-tale and balladry and to Classical myth ("There they live like the old Robin Hood of England; they say many young gentlemen flock to him every day, and fleet the time carelessly, as they did in the golden world") establishes the Forest as a world of unreality

- use of metaphors (“the penalty of Adam,/The season’s difference, as the icy fang/And churlish chiding of the winter’s wind”) expresses the real hardship to be encountered in Arden
- use of detailing in the accounts given by Corin of life in Arden (“fleeces”, “cote, flocks and bounds of feed”, “hands tarr’d over with the surgery of our sheep”) – a world of work is realistically outlined
- use of music: the songs (e.g. “Who doth ambition shun / And loves to live i’ the sun”) convey the myth of the “merry greenwood” – a world that never was, an unrealistic world
- use of a memorable personification (“let the forest judge”) endows Arden with sentient oversight of proceedings, taking it away from the real world
- use of the motif of time which is eliminated or relativised in Arden (“there’s no clock in the forest”, “Time travels in divers paces with / divers persons”) taking it out of the real time-bound world
- repeated use of pointed contrast, e.g. between Phoebe as imperious and disdainful mistress , based on literary models, and Rosalind’s brusque scolding (“Sell what you can, you are not for all markets”) injects a powerful dose of reality into proceedings in Arden

AO3: Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received.

The nature of Shakespearean Comedy:

- love usually a central theme
- plot involves lovers overcoming obstacles to their happiness – these obstacles may be external or internal
- may feature some aspect of the ‘battle of the sexes’
- complex plots – may involve pairs of lovers
- may feature female characters disguised as boys
- often features strong and intelligent young heroines
- builds towards a happy ending, usually in marriage
- may feature lively or impertinent servants as part of a comic disordering of normality or stability
- may feature the tricking of the old by the young as part of the same disordering
- plot may rely on mistaken identity and /or disguise (disguise by a dramatic convention was held to be impenetrable)
- may include a Fool among the Dramatis Personae, either a language-mangling buffoon, or a “wise fool” who may comment satirically on the action
- may feature various types of comedy – verbal, slapstick, caricature, social satire

AO4: Explore connections across and within literary texts.

The stimulus statement should be explored both in the extract and throughout the play.

5 *Measure for Measure*

Isabella's virtue is entirely selfish.

By referring closely to extract **5**, printed in the accompanying Resource Booklet and to other appropriately selected parts of the text, **show to what extent** you would agree with the view expressed above.

Your **argument** should include relevant comments on Shakespeare's dramatic methods, and relevant external contextual information on the nature of Shakespeare's Problem Plays.

N.B. Equal marks are available for your treatment of the given extract and other relevant parts of the text.

The following mark scheme should be applied in conjunction with the A2 1 Shakespearean Genres Mark Band Grid and the following table:

[0]	NONE
[1]–[10]	LITTLE UNDERSTANDING
[11]–[20]	BASIC
[21]–[25]	LIMITED
[26]–[30]	INCREASINGLY PURPOSEFUL
[31]–[40]	COHERENT
[41]–[50]	ASSURED

The information below is intended to **exemplify** the type of content you may see in responses. Reference should be made to some of the following points, and all other valid comments will be rewarded.

Responses should demonstrate the following:

AO1: Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression.

Answers should contain:

- knowledge and understanding of the play in appropriate reference and quotation
- order and relevance in conveying ideas
- appropriate and accurate expression
- appropriate use of literary terminology
- skilful and meaningful insertion of quotation.

AO5: Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.

This **driving objective** will require the candidate to:

- take due account of the key terms of the question, examining the relationship between them, i.e. **“Isabella's virtue”, “entirely”, “selfish”**
- offer opinion or judgement in response to the given readings of the text
- make an attempt at reasoning in support of his/her opinion
- provide textual referencing to illustrate his/her opinion

- show awareness of other readings than that expressed in the stimulus statement, e.g. that **at times (such as in the final scene) Isabella displays a virtue which can be seen as selfless.**

In addition to the extract, some situations which may be found useful in considering this question are:

- Lucio’s interactions with Isabella
- Angelo’s interactions with Isabella
- Claudio’s interaction with Isabella in prison
- Isabella’s cooperation with the Duke in effecting the ‘bed trick’
- Isabella’s role in effecting a pardon for Angelo at the end of the play

AO2: Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts.

Candidates should **identify** and **explore** aspects of Shakespeare’s dramatic methods in relation to the key terms of the question.

Extract

- use of proxemics: Isabella and Angelo on stage engaged in a philosophical argument to decide the fate of Claudio. This confrontation enforces the intensity of this life-or-death situation and highlights Isabella’s passionate defence of her brother through the exercise of selfless virtue
- use of a lexical pattern (“soul/sin/charity/peril”) associated with the traditional Christian doctrine about the nature of virtue which is used to develop a contrast between Angelo’s self-serving sophistry and Isabella’s more sincere and profoundly held belief in the Christian concept of selfless virtue
- use of contrast between the self-serving and morally dubious Angelo (“our compelled sins/ Stand more for number than for account”) and the selfless virtue of Isabella (“That I do beg his life, if it be sin,/Heaven let me bear it!”), which serves to highlight Isabella’s desire to save her brother’s life
- possible use of irony (“either you are ignorant,/Or seem so craftily; and that’s not good”) to convey Angelo’s unwitting prefiguration of the more morally reprehensible and selfish aspects of Isabella’s character as demonstrated by her participation in the deceitful ‘bed-trick’ later in the play
- use of the traditional symbol of the mask (“as these black masks/Proclaim an enshield beauty ten times louder/Than beauty could, display’d”) representing concealment of one’s true nature, to convey Angelo’s distorted perception of Isabella as devious and cunning rather than a figure of selfless virtue
- use of metaphor (“the all-binding law”) to underline the disjunction between Angelo’s superficial adherence to an irrevocable temporal law, which putatively regulates his role as deputy, and Isabella’s complete faith in a divine law which appears to govern her conception of virtue as being free from self-interest
- use of metaphor (“You must lay down the treasures of your body”) to highlight the irony of Angelo’s privileging the physical over the spiritual, and to convey his complete misapprehension of the absolute value Isabella places on her spiritual life and on selfless virtue
- use of an extended simile (“The impression of keen whips I’d wear as rubies,/And strip myself to death, as to a bed/That longing have been sick for”) comparing the suffering associated with martyrdom with the idea of spiritual gratification in order to convey how far Isabella is prepared to go to protect her virtue
- use of aphorism, echoing the language of Biblical precepts (“Better it were a brother died at once,/Than that a sister, by redeeming him,/ Should die for ever”), to problematise Isabella’s insistence on the role of a higher authority in preserving her virtue and presenting a moral conundrum for the audience

Wider Text

- use of various settings (the nunnery, Angelo's house, the prison, the City-gate) in which Isabella's virtue is displayed or tested in various ways, and a judgement can be made as to how far selfishness enters into it
- use of a lexical pattern to praise Isabella's virtue in terms of its angelic purity (e.g. Lucio: "I hold you as a thing ensky'd and sainted;/By your renouncement an immortal spirit,/And to be talked with in sincerity,/As with a saint") leaves little room for a charge of selfishness — the reliability of the speaker is questionable but the situation suggests truth-telling
- use of anaphora ("No ceremony that to great ones 'longs,/Not the King's crown, nor the deputed sword,/The marshall's truncheon, nor the judge's robe,/Become them with one half so good a grace/As mercy does") — her eloquent appeal for mercy for Claudio may be seen as an exercise in unselfish virtue
- use of contrast ("Not with fond shekels of the tested gold/...but with true prayers...from preserved souls,/From fasting maids whose minds are dedicate/To nothing temporal") to indicate that Isabella conceives of virtue as a rejection of worldly things and a devotion to the spiritual: can such rejection and such devotion be charged with selfishness?
- use of rhyme and parallel clauses (Isabella: "Then, Isobel, live chaste, and, brother, die:/More than our brother is our chastity") immediately after the second interview with Angelo offers a succinct and memorable statement of her conception of virtue — the problematic nature of her virtuousness is presented for our consideration
- repeated use of exclamations, rhetorical questions and hyperbole ("O you beast! ... is't not a kind of incest to take life/ From thy own sister's shame? ...Die, perish!") expresses Isabella's revulsion towards her brother and offers grounds for argument about the nature of her virtue
- use of rapidly successive entrances and exits, and of disguise as the Duke manipulates the outraged Isabella with lies and half-truths: Isabella's willingness to become confederate in the deceptions of the 'bed-trick' may problematise her virtue
- use of the plot device of the 'bed-trick' produces situations based on duplicity, e.g. Isabella pretends to be speaking out of outraged virtue in her accusation of Angelo before the Duke, who pretends astonishment — virtue, along with much else, is confused, problematic, a matter of "seeming"
- use of stage action as Isabella kneels in the final scene with the selfless intention of rectifying wrong and extending mercy may be argued as demonstrating a virtue less narrow and more humane than she has hitherto displayed: her appeal for mercy may also be contrasted with her earlier appeal to Angelo in II.ii
- use of personification ("[Angelo's] act did not o'ertake his bad intent,/And must be buried but as an intent") continues the development of Isabella's concept of virtue as she separates action and motive: this may be argued as illogical (why should the intent be buried?), or as indicating a decrease in selfishness

AO3: Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received.

The nature of Shakespeare's Problem Plays:

- usually listed as *All's Well that Ends Well*, *Measure for Measure* and *Troilus and Cressida* but definition and inclusion are disputed
- this group sometimes referred to as the 'problem comedies' or 'dark comedies'
- psychological dramas dealing with the dark side of personality and behaviour, often involving the characters and the audience being faced with moral conundrums
- there is a mixture of realistic and non-realistic aspects
- the resolution may not be felt to be wholly satisfactory: it may be felt that a comedic ending has been imposed on a play which has shown too much of the darker side of human life for such an ending to be convincing

AO4: Explore connections across and within literary texts.

The stimulus statement should be explored both in the extract and throughout the play.

6 *The Winter's Tale*

The marriage of Hermione and Leontes is a failure.

By referring to extract **6**, printed in the accompanying Resource Booklet and to other appropriately selected parts of the text, **show to what extent** you would agree with the view expressed above.

Your **argument** should include relevant comments on Shakespeare's dramatic methods, and relevant external contextual information on the nature of Shakespeare's Last Plays.

N.B. Equal marks are available for your treatment of the given extract and other relevant parts of the text.

The following mark scheme should be applied in conjunction with the A2 1 Shakespearean Genres Mark Band Grid and the following table:

[0]	NONE
[1]–[10]	LITTLE UNDERSTANDING
[11]–[20]	BASIC
[21]–[25]	LIMITED
[26]–[30]	INCREASINGLY PURPOSEFUL
[31]–[40]	COHERENT
[41]–[50]	ASSURED

The information below is intended to **exemplify** the type of content you may see in responses. Reference should be made to some of the following points, and all other valid comments will be rewarded.

Responses should demonstrate the following:

AO1: Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression.

Answers should contain:

- knowledge and understanding of the play in appropriate reference and quotation
- order and relevance in conveying ideas
- appropriate and accurate expression
- appropriate use of literary terminology
- skilful and meaningful insertion of quotation.

AO5: Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.

This **driving objective** will require the candidate to:

- take due account of the key terms of the question, examining the relationship between them, i.e. **“marriage”**, **“Hermione and Leontes”**, **“failure”**
- offer opinion or judgement in response to the given reading of the text
- make an attempt at reasoning in support of his/her opinion
- provide textual referencing to illustrate his/her opinion

- show awareness of other readings than that expressed in the stimulus statement, e.g. that **despite the failings in the marriage of Hermione and Leontes in the first half of the play, the play's resolution presents a sense of reconciliation for the married pair.**

In addition to the extract, some situations which may be found useful in considering this question are:

- the initial interaction between Hermione, Leontes and Polixenes which reveals the nature of the relationship between Hermione and Leontes
- the interaction between Leontes and Camillo where Leontes reveals his belief that Hermione has been unfaithful to him
- Leontes' asides and monologues in the first half of the play which reveal his irrational suspicions about his wife's loyalty
- Hermione's trial where she is accused of treason
- the closing scene of the play in which Hermione and Leontes are reunited after sixteen years

AO2: Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts.

Candidates should **identify** and **explore** aspects of Shakespeare's dramatic methods in relation to the key terms of the question.

Extract

- use of hyperbole ("harden'd be the hearts/Of all that hear me, and my near'st of kin/Cry fie upon my grave!") in Hermione's calling down of the most damaging consequences on herself if she has failed in the honourable requirements of her marriage
- use of repetition ("I loved him as in honour he requir'd, / With such a kind of love as might become/A lady like me; with a love even such,/... as yourself commanded") to show that she is beyond reproach as she has dutifully followed obligations of honour and obedience in her marriage – if the marriage is failing then the causes lie elsewhere
- use of metaphor ("Now, for conspiracy,/I know not how it tastes, though it be dish'd/For me to try how") to convey Hermione's assertion of innocence in response to the charges brought against her in bringing about the failure of her marriage
- use of a series of insulting epithets ("You had a bastard by Polixenes.../Thy brat") to convey Leontes' nihilistic belief that Hermione's child is the result of her infidelity with Polixenes which may be used to form an argument about Leontes' perceptions about the failure of their marriage
- use of simile ("My second joy.../... from his presence/I am barr'd like one infectious") which shows the extent of the punishment Hermione has received because of her husband's irrational jealousy which has led to the failure of the marriage
- use of the trope of the mother and child ("My third comfort/ ... from my breast—/The innocent milk in its most innocent mouth— /Hal'd out to murder") to reinforce the extension of damage to the innocent children when this marriage fails
- repeated use of imperatives (e.g. "Sir, spare your threats!", "Tell me... mistake me not") to convey Hermione pushing back and stating her view about where responsibility for the failure of the marriage lies

Wider Text

- use of contrast between the harmony of the pair in Act I (Leontes: "Well said, Hermione"; Hermione: "Leontes,/I love thee not a jar o'th'clock behind/What lady she her lord") and the cruel words which are spoken after this ("My wife's a hobby-horse") to show that the marriage of Hermione and Leontes is not initially presented as a failure
- use of Leontes' asides (e.g. "Too hot, too hot!/To mingle friendship far is mingling bloods") to convey the extent of Leontes' irrational jealousy which is the cause of a failing marriage
- use of cuckolding motif (e.g. "My bosom likes not, nor my brows!... hardening of my brows... a fork'd one!") to convey Leontes' unfounded belief that Hermione has been unfaithful to him

- use of setting in the trial scene where Hermione is forced to present a defence of her role in the marriage in a public forum (“my accusation...testimony...‘Not guilty’”) demonstrates the failure of the marriage
- use of the plot device of the oracle in exposing to Leontes his madness and his responsibility for the failure of his marriage
- use of Chorus to show the passing of time (“I slide/O’er sixteen years”) which conveys that Leontes has submitted to the spiritual discipline imposed upon him by Paulina as a form of penance for bringing about the failure of the marriage
- use of music in the closing scene of the play to suggest, as was customary, a harmonious resolution of the discords of the marriage
- use of spectacle in the closing scene of the play (the statue coming to life) to suggest a possible restoration of the marriage between Leontes and Hermione

AO3: Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received.

The nature of Shakespeare’s Last Plays:

- inclusion in this group, and characteristics of the Last Plays are sometimes disputed, but generally held to include *Cymbeline*, *Pericles*, *The Winter’s Tale* and *The Tempest*
- written after the tragedies, featuring mixed elements – comedy, music, a heightened sense of visual spectacle, supernatural elements, features of the fashionable masque form, tragicomedy
- the Last Plays concentrate more on the presentation of incident and action rather than on individual characterisation
- probably responding to a change in popular taste in early years of seventeenth century
- themes: reconciliation, mercy, forgiveness, restoration and regeneration (forming a contrast to the themes of the tragedies); final harmony sometimes achieved through the actions or influences of young lovers; a sense that younger characters can put right historical wrongs and imbue the future with hope
- there is primarily a courtly setting, or at least a protagonist of noble birth, but contrasting ‘low folk’, usually rustic peasants, will also have a role to play in the action
- the trope of the pastoral idyll interpenetrates a number of Shakespeare’s plays with its connotations of an innocent and unspoilt way of life
- the structure is episodic and may take in events occurring over a long period, sometimes in violation of Aristotle’s ‘Unity of Time’

AO4: Explore connections across and within literary texts.

The stimulus statement should be explored both in the extract and throughout the play.