
A-level

ENGLISH LITERATURE B

(7717/1B)

Paper 1B: Literary Genres: Aspects of Comedy

Mark scheme

Specimen Material

Version/Stage: Version 3.1

Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation, each associate analyses a number of students' scripts: alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Assessment Writer.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of students' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

Further copies of this Mark Scheme are available from aqa.org.uk

Information for Examiners marking Aspects of Comedy: Closed Book

Welcome to this mark scheme which is designed to help you to deliver fair and accurate assessment. Please read carefully all sections and ensure that you follow the requirements that they contain.

The significance of Closed Book

Examiners must understand that in marking a Closed Book exam there are examining implications. Candidates do not have their texts in front of them, so while it is expected that they will use quotations, it is also legitimate to use close textual references. They will have had to memorise quotations so there may be some errors which should not be over-penalised. Detailed discussions of particular sections of texts, apart from the printed extracts, are less likely here than in Open Book exams. Instead, candidates may range broadly across their texts as they construct their arguments.

There are specific issues for AO2 – how meanings are shaped in texts. There is, with Closed Book, the expectation that candidates will not have the texts in front of them, so although they will sometimes be able to make specific references to structural and organisational issues, at other times they will be more general.

Arriving at Marks

1. All questions are framed to address all the Assessment Objectives (AOs). Weightings are given above the generic mark scheme. Answers are marked holistically but, when deciding upon a mark in a band, examiners should bear in mind the relative weightings of the assessment objectives (see page 6) and be careful not to over/under credit a particular skill. In all questions, more weight should be given to AO1, AO2 and AO3 than to AO4 and AO5. This will be exemplified and reinforced as part of examiner training and standardisation. Examiners need to read the whole answer, taking into account its strengths and weaknesses, and then place it in the appropriate band.
2. Examiners should avoid making early snap judgements before the whole answer has been read. Some candidates begin tentatively but go on to make relevant points.
3. Examiners should be prepared to use the full mark range and not ‘bunch’ scripts in the middle for safety. Top marks are attainable if candidates could not be expected to do more in the time and under the conditions in which they are working.
4. Examiners should mark positively. Although the mark scheme provides some indicators for what candidates are likely to write about, examiners should be willing to reward what is actually there – **provided, of course, that it is relevant to the question being asked.**
5. Examiners should remember that there are no right answers. Candidates’ views which are relevant, well-argued and supported by appropriate textual evidence must receive credit whether the examiner agrees with the views or not. It is important to try to remain flexible if a candidate introduces unusual or unorthodox ideas.
6. Examiners should remember that length and quality are not synonymous. Some brief answers may be relevant and concise. Equally, long answers may be diffuse and repetitive.

7. If answers are short or incomplete, examiners can only reward what is there and assess accordingly. Some further credit may be given to answers finished in note form.

Using the Mark Bands

8. When placing answers in mark bands, examiners need to look closely at the descriptors and the detailed generic mark bands on page 7. The key words for the bands are important and are printed below.

MARK BAND DESCRIPTORS	
Band 5	perceptive/assured
Band 4	coherent/thorough
Band 3	straightforward/relevant
Band 2	simple/generalised
Band 1	largely irrelevant, largely misunderstood, largely inaccurate

9. Answers placed at the top of the band will securely address the descriptors; answers at the lower end of the band will securely address the descriptors below and begin to show the qualities of the band into which you are placing them. Careful judgements need to be made about marks in the middle of the range; here it is likely that the key descriptors will be more intermittent but still clearly evident.
10. There will be occasions when an answer address descriptors in different bands; in such cases, the ‘best-fit’ model applies. Here examiners will need to exercise a different kind of judgement, looking to see where the answer can be most fairly and appropriately placed, in terms of its quality, against the descriptors.
11. Examiners must remember that the mark bands are not equivalent to grades: grades are decided by the awarding committee at the end of each session.

Advice about marking each section

Section A

12. Examiners need to bear in mind the following key points when marking extract based questions:
- does the candidate have an overview of the extract?
 - has the candidate written about dramatic method?
 - has the candidate seen the significance of the extract in relation to the overall comedy?
 - has the candidate quoted from the extract to support ideas?
 - the candidate’s AO1 competence.

Section B

13. Examiners need to bear in mind the following key points when marking questions based on single texts:

- has the candidate engaged in a relevant debate or constructed a relevant argument?
- has the candidate referred to different parts of the text to support their views?
- has the candidate referred to Shakespeare's dramatic method?
- the candidate's AO1 competence.

Section C

14. Examiners need to bear in mind the following key points when marking questions connecting two texts:

- has the candidate focused on the aspect of comedy set up in the question and referred to two texts?
- has the candidate engaged in a relevant debate or constructed a relevant argument around the two texts?
- has the candidate considered the writers' authorial methods in the two texts?
- has the candidate adhered to the rubric – one drama text and one other, with one of the texts being pre-1900?
- has the candidate given substantial coverage of two texts?
- the candidate's AO1 competence.

Annotation

15. Examiners should remember that annotation is directed solely to senior examiners.

16. In addition to giving a mark, examiners should write a brief summative comment indicating how the mark has been arrived at. These comments are likely to mirror the appropriate mark band descriptors but comments must not be mechanical. Examiners need to describe candidate performance.

17. Please remember that scripts can go back to candidates, so although your audience is a senior examiner, you must express your views temperately.

18. The following symbols can be used when marking scripts:

- tick for a good point, idea, reference, etc
- tick in brackets for a potentially good point, not fully made
- underlining for an error in fact or expression
- D when a candidate is describing content
- R for repetition
- I for irrelevance
- ? for when meaning is not clear.

Please do not use your own private systems, as these will mean nothing to senior examiners. If in doubt about what to use, simply write clear comments.

19. Use the Model Marked Script for guidance.

The Assessment Objectives and their significance

20. All questions are framed to test AOs 2, 3, 4 and 5, so if candidates answer the question, then they will be addressing the AOs. In marking questions, however, examiners must also take account of AO1, which tests more than technical accuracy.

The AOs are as follows:

- AO1** Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression. (28%)
- AO2** Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts. (24%)
- AO3** Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received. (24%)
- AO4** Explore connections across literary texts. (12%)
- AO5** Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations. (12%)

Rubric Infringements

The rubric of this paper could be infringed in the following ways:

- candidates might not write on a drama text in Section C
- candidates might use the same text in Section C that they have used in Section A
- candidates might use another Section A text in Section C
- candidates might not write about a pre-1900 text in Section C
- candidates might answer on only one text in Section C.

If there has been an infringement, the whole answer needs to be read and judged on its quality. A mark should then be given based on the best relevant part of the response. The mark given will not be beyond Band 3.

Mark Scheme

It is important to remember that these students, in the main, are 18 years old so we are judging their skills at the end of Key Stage 5.

Weightings for each question are as follows:

AO1: 7 marks; AO2: 6 marks; AO3: 6 marks; AO4: 3 marks; AO5: 3 marks

Mark	AO	Typical features	How to arrive at mark
<p>Band 5 Perceptive/Assured 21-25 marks</p> <p>'Perception' is demonstrated when students are showing the depth of their understanding and responding sensitively to the texts and task.</p> <p>'Assuredness' is shown when students write with confidence and conviction.</p>	AO1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> perceptive, assured and sophisticated argument in relation to the task assured use of literary critical concepts and terminology; mature and impressive expression 	<p>This band is characterised by perceptive and assured work which shows confidence, sharpness of mind and sophistication in relation to the task.</p> <p>At the top of the band students are consistently assured and will demonstrate sensitivity and perception across all five assessment objectives in the course of their response.</p> <p>At the bottom of the band there will be coherence and accuracy with some perception but with less consistency and evenness.</p>
	AO2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> perceptive understanding of authorial methods in relation to the task assured engagement with how meanings are shaped by the methods used 	
	AO3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> perceptive understanding of the significance of relevant contexts in relation to the task assuredness in the connection between those contexts and the genre studied 	
	AO4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> perceptive exploration of connections across literary texts arising out of generic study 	
	AO5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> perceptive and confident engagement with the debate set up in the task 	
<p>Band 4 Coherent/ Thorough 16-20 marks</p> <p>'Coherence' is shown when students are logical and consistent in their arguments in relation to the task. They hold their ideas together in an intelligible way.</p> <p>'Thoroughness' is shown when students write carefully, precisely and accurately.</p>	AO1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> logical, thorough and coherent argument in relation to the task where ideas are debated in depth appropriate use of literary critical concepts and terminology; precise and accurate expression 	<p>This band is characterised by coherent and thorough work where ideas are linked together in a focused and purposeful way in relation to the task.</p> <p>At the top of the band students will demonstrate a fully coherent and thorough argument across all five assessment objectives in the course of their response.</p> <p>At the bottom of the band ideas will be discussed in a shaped, relevant and purposeful way with a clear sense of direction, with one or two lapses in coherence and accuracy.</p>
	AO2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> thorough understanding of authorial methods in relation to the task thorough engagement with how meanings are shaped by the methods used 	
	AO3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> thorough understanding of the significance of relevant contexts in relation to the task coherence in the connection between those contexts and the genre studied 	
	AO4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> logical and consistent exploration of connections across literary texts arising out of generic study 	
	AO5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> thorough engagement with the debate set up in the task 	

<p>Band 3 Straightforward/ Relevant 11-15 marks</p> <p>'Straightforward' work is shown when students make their ideas in relation to the task clearly known.</p> <p>'Relevant' work is shown when students are focused on the task and use detail in an appropriate and supportive way.</p>	AO1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sensibly ordered ideas in a relevant argument in relation to the task some use of literary critical concepts and terminology which are mainly appropriate; straightforward and clear expression 	<p>This band is characterised by straightforward and relevant work where the student's response to the task is clear and intelligible.</p> <p>At the top of the band students will demonstrate consistent straightforward understanding in the course of their argument. Ideas will be developed relevantly.</p> <p>At the bottom of the band there will be flashes of relevant understanding with evidence of straightforward thinking.</p>
	AO2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> straightforward understanding of authorial methods in relation to the task relevant engagement with how meanings are shaped by the methods used 	
	AO3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> straightforward understanding of the significance of relevant contexts in relation to the task relevant connections between those contexts and the genre studied 	
	AO4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> explores connections across literary texts arising out of generic study in a straightforward way 	
	AO5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> straightforward engagement with the debate set up in the task 	
<p>Band 2 Simple/Generalised 6-10 marks</p> <p>'Simple' work is shown when students write in an unelaborated and basic way in relation to the task.</p> <p>'Generalised' work is shown when students write without regard to particular details.</p>	AO1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a simple structure to the argument which may not be consistent but which does relate to the task generalised use of literary critical concepts and terminology; simple expression 	<p>This band is characterised by simple and generalised work which is mainly linked to the task.</p> <p>At the top of the band students will demonstrate a basic generalised understanding in the course of their answer. Ideas will be developed in a simple way.</p> <p>At the bottom of the band there will be inconsistency, but the beginnings of a simple and generalised understanding.</p>
	AO2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> simple understanding of authorial methods in relation to the task generalised engagement with how meanings are shaped by the methods used 	
	AO3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> simple understanding of the significance of relevant contexts in relation to the task generalised connections between those contexts and the genre studied 	
	AO4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> simple exploration of connections across literary texts arising out of generic study 	
	AO5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> simple and generalised response to the debate set up in the task 	

<p>Band 1 Largely irrelevant/largely misunderstood/largely inaccurate 1-5 marks</p> <p>‘Largely irrelevant’ work is shown when students write in an unclear way with only occasional reference to what is required by the question.</p> <p>‘Largely misunderstood’ and ‘largely inaccurate’ work is shown when knowledge of the text is insecure, hazy and often wrong.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some vague points in relation to the task and some ideas about task and text(s) • the writing is likely to be unclear and incorrect; if it is accurate the content will be irrelevant • little sense of the AOs in relation to the task; little sense of how meanings are shaped; little sense of any relevant contexts; little sense of any connection arising out of generic study; little sense of an argument in relation to the task 	<p>This band is characterised by work which is largely irrelevant and largely misunderstood and largely inaccurate, and so unlikely to be addressing the AOs in a relevant way.</p> <p>At the top of the band students will mention some unconnected points in relation to the task during the course of their writing. The writing is likely to lack clarity.</p> <p>At the bottom of the band there will be no connection with the task; the writing will be hard to follow and irrelevant.</p>
<p>0 marks</p>		<p>No marks for response when nothing is written or where response has no connection to the text(s) or task.</p>	

Section A

Question 01

***The Taming of the Shrew* – William Shakespeare**

Read the extract below and then answer the question.

Explore the significance of this extract in relation to the comedy of the play as a whole. Remember to include in your answer relevant analysis of Shakespeare's dramatic methods.

[25 marks]

Some possible content is given below. It suggests some of the ways the Assessment Objectives might be addressed, but as 'significance' relates to contextual, structural, linguistic and interpretative issues, some strands listed could easily address more than one AO. In their answer students should refer to the significance that can be seen in the extract and how some of this significance may pertain to the comedy of the play as a whole.

Examiners must also remember that, because students have read and studied *The Taming of the Shrew* through the lens of **comedy**, the AOs must necessarily be connected to that genre through the task.

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

With respect to competence in writing:

- quality of argument
- organisation of ideas
- use of appropriate concepts and terminology
- technical accuracy

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

With respect to significance of dramatic method:

Focus might be on:

- visual display of Bianca tied by her hands, possibly the striking of Bianca by Kate, Kate's melodramatic chasing of Bianca
- use of insults, 'minion', 'I charge thee', use of 'thee' and 'you' to show Kate's power and Bianca's apparent respect
- sharp reprimands of Baptista, Kate's petulance towards Bianca
- the disguise of Lucentio, Hortensio and Tranio
- use of irony when Petruchio talks of the fair and virtuous Kate
- use of language associated with power: 'bondman', 'unbind', 'command', etc

Given that this is a **closed book** exam, references to other parts of the play may be more generalised than those from the passage.

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

With respect to significance of contexts:

Focus might be on:

- setting of Baptista's house in Padua
- Elizabethan attitudes towards marriage, courtship, women as represented in the play
- attitudes towards beauty, references to Bianca's beauty and her being sought by different suitors – 'you fancy riches more: You will have Gremio to keep you fair'
- gender divisions, etc

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts.

With respect to significance of connections with the comedic genre:

Focus might be on:

- sibling rivalry, Bianca's apparent subservience to Kate calling her 'good sister', her begging and imploring Kate to unbind her
- comic jealousy of Kate
- dispensing of suitors by Bianca, offering men to Kate
- use of the comic love story, etc

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.

With respect to the interpretative significances that can be found:

Students might develop any of the points mentioned above and suggest what meanings arise from those ideas and how audiences might react, for example:

- comment might focus on Bianca's dissembling, particularly in the light of her behaviour at the end of the play – she might be admired or condemned
- there might be comment on male representation, particularly Petruchio – different views might be posited about his behaviour and language
- comment could also be on the significance of the disguises of Lucentio etc and the impact these have on later dramatic events
- comment might be on the humour of the rivalry between Kate and Bianca, two women fighting, Kate's hurling insults, the farcical nature of the scene which could be seen in terms of slapstick comedy; or perhaps students might focus more on what it reveals of social attitudes in the Elizabethan era as represented in the play, or perhaps looked at from a more modern perspective there might be pity for Kate who feels so humiliated because of her gender and the expectations regarding the marriage market, etc

Accept any valid discussion of interpretations and any valid discussion of contexts of production and reception which are grounded in the passage.

Question 02***Twelfth Night* – William Shakespeare**

Read the extract below and then answer the question.

Explore the significance of this extract in relation to the comedy of the play as a whole. Remember to include in your answer relevant analysis of Shakespeare's dramatic methods.

[25 marks]

Some possible content is given below. It suggests some of the ways the Assessment Objectives might be addressed, but as 'significance' relates to contextual, structural, linguistic and interpretative issues some strands listed could easily address more than one AO. In their answer students should refer to the significance that can be seen in the extract and how some of this significance may pertain to the comedy of the play as a whole.

Examiners must also remember that, because students have read and studied *Twelfth Night* through the lens of **comedy**, the AOs must necessarily be connected to that genre through the task.

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

With respect to competence in writing:

- quality of argument
- organisation of ideas
- use of appropriate concepts and terminology
- technical accuracy

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

With respect to significance of dramatic method:

Focus might be on:

- use of disguise – Viola in man's attire
- structural significance of Viola's first appearance as Cesario,
- entrance of the Duke
- use of the go-between and the creation of the love triangle
- use of irony when Orsino describes Cesario's beauty as that of a woman
- use of language of love: 'passion of my love' 'discourse of my dear faith', affectionate use of 'thee', 'good youth', 'it shall become thee well', 'dear lad', 'I know thy constellation is right apt'
- use of foreshadowing – 'Prosper well in this/And thou shalt live as freely as thy lord,/To call his fortunes thine'
- dramatic surprise in soliloquy of Viola's confession of love at the end of the scene, etc

Given that this is a **closed book** exam, references to other parts of the play may be more generalised than those from the passage.

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

With respect to significance of contexts:

Focus might be on:

- the setting of Orsino's court in Illyria
- social context – the master/servant relationship, attitudes towards power and servitude
- the expectations set up in the extract (and play) about behaviour in Elizabethan courts, attitudes to mourning and courtship
- the irony of Viola (being played by a man in Elizabethan theatre) in disguise as a boy
- gender roles, how in Elizabethan society as set up in the play, women had to disguise themselves as men to have an active social role, etc

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts.

With respect to significance of connections with the comedic genre:

Focus might be on:

- excessiveness – Orsino's love for Olivia, use of excessive language – 'clamorous', 'leap all civil bounds', 'unfold the passion of my love', excessive behaviour
- comic romance/comic love story – the intimacy of the conversation between Viola and Orsino, Orsino's disappointment at his unrequited love - the report given of Olivia's rebuttal of Orsino's love
- absurd behaviour – ridiculousness of what Orsino's demands of Cesario
- lack of constancy in love – suggestion that Orsino might be capricious regarding love (language relating to this – his 'humour', 'question the continuance of his love, is he inconstant ... in his favours')
- suggestion of the final happy resolution (and marriages) in Viola's simple declaration of love ('a barful strife! Who'er I woo, myself would be his wife'), etc

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.

With respect to the interpretative significances that can be found:

Students might develop any of the points mentioned above and suggest what meanings arise from those ideas and how audiences might react, for example:

- the ridiculousness of Orsino as a character, his excessiveness and self-indulgence, his lack of depth, his behaviour, his sentimentality, his luxuriating in his own excesses, the stupidity of his focusing on an object of love (Olivia) that is apparently unmoveable
- some might comment on the nature of love itself and how it is shown to be disarming whether from an Elizabethan or 21st century perspective
- some students will write about Viola's good sense and the depth of her feelings, the sincerity of her love being bestowed upon an unworthy object

- comment might be made on the nature of dramatic comedy itself where audiences need to suspend disbelief and enter into the spirit of comic absurdity that pervades the genre, etc

Accept any valid discussion of interpretations and any valid discussion of contexts of production and reception which are grounded in the passage.

Section B

Question 03

***The Taming of the Shrew* – William Shakespeare**

‘If the audience find the ending of *The Taming of the Shrew* funny then they are the intellectual equivalent of the drunken tinker, Christopher Sly.’

To what extent do you agree with this view?

Remember to include in your answer relevant comment on Shakespeare’s dramatic methods.

[25 marks]

Some possible content is given below. It suggests some of the ways the Assessment Objectives might be addressed. Some ideas will inevitably address more than one AO.

Examiners must also remember that, because students have read and studied *The Taming of the Shrew* through the lens of **comedy**, the AOs must necessarily be connected to that genre through the task.

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

With respect to competence in writing:

- quality of argument as students address ‘To what extent’ they agree with the given view
- organisation of ideas
- use of appropriate concepts and terminology
- technical accuracy

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

With respect to dramatic method:

Focus might be on:

- structural issues relating the scenes with Christopher Sly at the start of the play to the play’s ending, the use of the framing device
- sense of performance in Kate’s speech – for her on stage audience and the theatre audience
- use of soliloquy, imagery, linguistic devices, patterning
- use of entrances and exits, etc

Given that this is a **closed book** exam, comment on the ways meanings are shaped may be generalised.

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

With respect to contextual issues arising from the question and the play:

In writing about whether the ‘ending’ of the play is ‘funny’, students will specifically be engaging with dramatic, social (marriage), moral and gender contexts. In discussing whether audiences, who find the ending funny, are the intellectual equivalents of Christopher Sly, students will be engaging with and demonstrating understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts of when the play was written and how it has been received. Focus might be on:

- the dramatic comedy provided at the end of the play by the female behaviour of Bianca and the Widow in their attitudes to Kate
- the silliness of the males and their wagering
- the words of Kate’s final speech and how they are disgusting to modern sensibilities
- Christopher Sly’s ignorance and his lack of understanding of women and the way 21st century audiences ought to be more open-minded (reference might be made to the different versions of the play and the reappearance of Sly in the quarto version of *Taming of the Shrew*)
- focus on the uncomfortable division between the genders and also between Kate and Bianca and the Widow
- the world of dramatic comedy and how it includes some disturbing issues, etc

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts.

With respect to connections with the wider comedic genre:

In writing about the ending of the play and whether it is ‘funny’, students will be connecting with the comedic concept of humour, the upbeat resolutions and the undercurrent of some darker issues.

Focus might be on:

- whole concept of dramatic frame, and layers of action in comedy
- the apparent sense of harmony at the end of the play as Kate and Petruchio celebrate their marriage
- the apparent happiness of the newly-wedded couple who speak with one voice
- the dissenting voices of Bianca and the Widow which hint at discord
- the possibility that Kate is suppressed and broken, a disturbing darker issue, etc

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.

With respect to meanings and interpretations:

Some students will agree with the proposition set up in the task and focus on:

- the ignorance of those who see the suppression of women as funny
- the horrible abasement of Kate
- Petruchio’s control (reference might be made to his physical treatment of Kate in Act 4)
- the misogynistic views in the play as a whole – especially the ending, etc

Some will disagree and focus on:

- the way that the nature of comedy should allow us to laugh at human behaviour and not take ourselves or Kate's behaviour and words seriously
- the assertion of the quotation about Christopher Sly
- the potential game-playing of Kate and Petruchio and subsequent duping of their audience as being doubly funny
- the possibility that Kate is in fact duping Petruchio which is again funny
- Sly's stupidity, as evidenced in the opening of the play, and its not being a relevant description of theatre audiences who find the ending funny, etc

Accept any valid interpretations, any valid comments on contexts of production and reception and any relevant integrated comment on dramatic methods that are embedded into the argument.

Question 04***The Taming of the Shrew* – William Shakespeare**

‘The tongue-lashings that Katherina gives Petruchio have no other purpose than to make audiences laugh.’

To what extent do you agree with this view?

Remember to include in your answer relevant comment on Shakespeare’s dramatic methods.

[25 marks]

Some possible content is given below. It suggests some of the ways the Assessment Objectives might be addressed. Some ideas will inevitably address more than one AO.

Examiners must also remember that, because students have read and studied *The Taming of the Shrew* through the lens of **comedy**, the AOs must necessarily be connected to that genre through the task.

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

With respect to competence in writing:

- quality of argument as students address ‘To what extent’ they agree with the given view
- organisation of ideas
- use of appropriate concepts and terminology
- technical accuracy

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

With respect to dramatic method:

Focus might be on:

- structural issues relating to where the scenes between Kate and Petruchio take place
- the jibes and insults that Kate delivers and the ferocity of her attacks
- the significance of the play’s title – the tongue-lashing woman will be tamed
- the use of soliloquy, imagery, linguistic devices, patterning
- the use of dramatic action etc

Given that this is a **closed book** exam, comment on the ways meanings are shaped may be generalised.

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

With respect to contextual issues arising from the question and the play:

In writing about Katherina’s ‘tongue-lashings’ and ‘laughter’, students will specifically be engaging with dramatic, social, gender and linguistic contexts. In discussing whether the only purpose of the

tongue-lashings is to make audiences laugh, students will be engaging with and demonstrating understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts of when the play was written and how it has been received. Focus might be on:

- the contextual humour associated with the shrew or the scolding woman in literature in Elizabethan times and earlier
- the way Kate, albeit briefly, offers a robust challenge to the power of men
- the world of dramatic comedy and the inclusion of sparring and verbal attacks
- the way that modern audiences might simply see the play as reflecting an earlier age
- the Elizabethan idea – as reflected in the play – that women are a scourge to men's sensibilities
- the position of women in power politics, their only power is with their tongues, etc

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts.

With respect to connections with the wider comedic genre:

In writing about the tongue-lashings that Katherine gives Petruchio and whether their only purpose is to make audiences laugh, students will be connecting with the comedic concept of humour, the rivalry between the sexes and the undercurrent of some darker issues. Focus might be on:

- the nature of dramatic comedy and its purpose to entertain
- humour created through Kate's attacks, Petruchio's reactions to them and the audience's expectations that they will marry
- the expectation that in comedy there will be arguments, wit and repartee and extravagant insults, especially between the sexes etc

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.

With respect to meanings and interpretations:

Some students will agree with the proposition set up in the task and focus on:

- the way that the nature of comedy should allow us to laugh at human behaviour and not take ourselves or Kate's behaviour and words seriously
- the knowledge that Petruchio begins a relationship with Kate knowing of her potential, knowing too that a 'little din' will not daunt his ears, so audiences might delight in her scolding knowing that Petruchio will be unharmed and will assert his power ultimately
- the sheer comedy of Kate's attacks on Petruchio, her energy and the inventiveness and the venom of her language. etc.

Some will disagree and focus on other purposes:

- Kate's scoldings as a means to enable audiences to reflect on the psychology of human beings, that tongue-lashing can reveal deeper psychological needs, that Kate here desires to be loved and valued, Kate's being a dramatic contrast to Bianca
- the way Kate's attacks show the intelligence of women
- the way Kate's tongue-lashings of Petruchio reveal her disquiet, not just with him, but with the injustice of the treatment of women in the society reflected in the play, etc

Accept any valid interpretations, any valid comments on contexts of production and reception and any relevant integrated comment on dramatic methods that are embedded into the argument.

Question 05***Twelfth Night* – William Shakespeare**

‘In *Twelfth Night* men are presented as having a greater depth of feeling than women.’

To what extent do you agree with this view?

Remember to include in your answer relevant comment on Shakespeare’s dramatic methods.

[25 marks]

Some possible content is given below. It suggests some of the ways the Assessment Objectives might be addressed. Some ideas will inevitably address more than one AO.

Examiners must also remember that, because students have read and studied *Twelfth Night* through the lens of **comedy**, the AOs must necessarily be connected to that genre through the task.

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

With respect to competence in writing:

- quality of argument as students address ‘To what extent’ they agree with the given view
- organisation of ideas
- use of appropriate concepts and terminology
- technical accuracy

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

With respect to dramatic method:

Focus might be on:

- the use of disguise – Viola as Cesario – and cross-dressing
- the use of twins to foreground representations of men and women and their feeling
- the use of structure and patterning in focusing attention on men and women and their depth of feeling (Orsino in the play’s opening, the willow cabin scene, the comic resolution)
- the use of soliloquy, asides, imagery, linguistic devices, romantic language
- the use of dramatic action etc

Given that this is a **closed book** exam, comment on the ways meanings are shaped may be generalised.

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

With respect to contextual issues arising from the question and the play:

In writing about ‘men’, ‘greater depth of feeling’ and ‘women’, students will specifically be engaging with the dramatic context and contexts of gender (representations of masculinity and femininity).

sexual politics and love. In discussing whether men have a greater depth of feeling than women, students will be engaging with and demonstrating understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts of when the play was written and how it has been received. Focus might be on:

- the Elizabethan idea – as reflected in the attitudes of Orsino – that men are capable of deeper feelings than women (partly because they are empowered to feel)
- the exemplification of the courtly love ideal through Orsino (for Orsino love is debilitating, all-consuming and the object of his love is cruel as suggested in Feste's song)
- Viola as a free and independent spirit, unshackled by father, husband, lover or brother, who allows her feelings to flourish
- Viola's use of disguise, her cross-dressing, which creates gender ambiguity in terms of which sex feels most deeply
- the way that Viola and Olivia challenge Elizabethan stereotypes, as set up in the play, in terms of the depth of their feelings – Olivia pursues Cesario and overturns social conventions
- the way that 21st century readers might focus specifically on the depth of feeling displayed by Antonio for Sebastian
- the fact that both men and women were played by males in Elizabethan times and so in that sense men always show the deepest feelings, etc

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts.

With respect to connections with the wider comedic genre:

In writing about 'depth of feeling' and the relative feelings of men and women, students will be connecting with the comedic concept of the affections, specifically love and the variety of love that comedy allows. Focus might be on:

- the deep feelings of men in relation to love – Orsino, Malvolio, Sir Andrew, Sir Toby, Antonio, the disguised Viola, etc
- the deep feelings of women – Viola, Olivia (who challenge societal norms)
- Maria in terms of her depth of feelings – her joy of plotting, her delight in Sir Toby's proposal
- the ways that depth of feeling leads to marriage – as expected in dramatic comedy (in the resolution it matters little which sex has the greater depth of feeling) etc

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.

With respect to meanings and interpretations:

Some students will agree with the proposition set up in the task and focus on:

- the depth of Orsino's feelings as he languishes at the altar of love

- the passion shown in Malvolio's confessions of love for Olivia and later the passion in his call for revenge
- the feelings shown by Sir Andrew that are masked by his drunkenness
- the apparent coldness of Olivia
- the lack of passion in Maria perhaps
- the passionate and understated love of Antonio for Sebastian, etc

Some will disagree and focus on:

- the depth of Viola's feelings
- the way that Viola shows the depth of her passion in a private rather than public sense, but with more substance to the quality of her love than that shown by the male characters
- the depth of love Olivia feels for her brother
- the love Olivia feels for who she believes is Cesario, the way she is prepared to sacrifice her dignity and position in declaring her love for a servant
- the superficiality of Sebastian's love for Olivia compared to that of Viola for Orsino, etc

Accept any valid interpretations, any valid comments on contexts of production and reception and any relevant integrated comment on dramatic methods that are embedded into the argument.

Question 06***Twelfth Night* – William Shakespeare**

‘*Twelfth Night* delights in the folly of misrule.’

To what extent do you agree with this view?

Remember to include in your answer relevant comment on Shakespeare’s dramatic methods.

[25 marks]

Some possible content is given below. It suggests some of the ways the Assessment Objectives might be addressed. Some ideas will inevitably address more than one AO.

Examiners must also remember that, because students have read and studied *Twelfth Night* through the lens of **comedy**, the AOs must necessarily be connected to that genre through the task.

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

With respect to competence in writing:

- quality of argument as students address ‘To what extent’ they agree with the given view.
- organisation of ideas
- use of appropriate concepts and terminology
- technical accuracy

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

With respect to dramatic method:

Focus might be on:

- the use of disguise – Viola as Cesario, Feste as Sir Topas
- the use of structure and patterning
- the visual display of the duping of Malvolio, his being imprisoned – all representing the collapse of order
- the use of soliloquy, asides, imagery, linguistic devices, song, drunken speeches, the play’s foregrounding the instability of language
- the use of dramatic action, etc

Given that this is a **closed book** exam, comment on the ways meanings are shaped may be generalised.

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

With respect to contextual issues arising from the question and the play:

In writing about ‘folly’ and ‘misrule’, students will specifically be engaging with the dramatic context

and contexts of religion, power and social class. In discussing whether the play ‘delights’ in the folly of misrule, students will be engaging with and demonstrating understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts of when the play was written and how it has been received.

Focus might be on:

- the gulling of Malvolio, where the audience delights in the austere puritan getting his comeuppance, perhaps not least of all because of the puritan dislike of theatre in Shakespeare’s England
- Feste as the all-licensed fool and the significance of the fool in Elizabethan households, Feste of course being a wise fool – his wearing not motley in his brain
- the way that misrule is delightful because it is part of the twelve nights of Christmas celebrations and life will soon be back to ‘a harsher normality’
- the way that the lower classes subvert the power of the aristocracy, etc

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts.

With respect to connections with the wider comedic genre:

In writing about ‘delights’ and the ‘folly of misrule’, students will be connecting with the comedic concepts of fun, entertainment and the overturning of order. Focus might be on:

- the chaos caused by Sir Toby and Sir Andrew and Olivia’s seeming inability to control their behaviour
- the comedy of the tricks played on Malvolio
- the lack of order in the comic fights and the visual humour created by them
- perhaps the way that only in dramatic comedy is misrule delightful, but not if connections are made with real life
- the audience’s awareness/expectation that because they are watching a comedy no harm will arise because of the misrule, etc but potentially the darker side to the comedy

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.

With respect to meanings and interpretations:

Some students will agree with the proposition set up in the task and focus on:

- the humour of the foolishness displayed in the drunken scenes with Sir Toby and Sir Andrew
- the way the comic characters subvert order and satisfy an audience’s desire to challenge power and social structure
- the way that misrule characterises Olivia’s household and makes the scenes there delightful in comparison with the more serious scenes in Orsino’s court, etc

Some will disagree and focus on:

- the way the overturning of order in the gulling of Malvolio leads to cruelty
- the way that misrule reveals some disturbing behaviours
- the way that misrule is threatening and is only one step away from chaos
- the way that misrule casts a dark shadow on the custodians of responsibility and power, etc

Accept any valid interpretations, any valid comments on contexts of production and reception and any relevant integrated comment on dramatic methods that are embedded into the argument.

Section C

Question 07

‘Comedies leave readers and audiences with a final sense of joy.’

To what extent do you agree with this view in relation to **two** texts you have studied? Remember to include in your answer relevant comment on the ways the writers have shaped meanings.

[25 marks]

Some possible content is given below. It suggests some of the ways the Assessment Objectives might be addressed. Some ideas will inevitably address more than one AO.

Examiners must also remember that, because students have read and studied the two texts through the lens of **comedy**, the AOs must necessarily be connected to that genre through the task.

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

With respect to competence in writing:

- quality of argument as students address ‘To what extent’ they agree with the given view
- organisation of ideas
- use of appropriate concepts and terminology
- technical accuracy

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

With respect to dramatic/authorial method:

- the structure of the drama texts in relation to the task
- the use of dialogue, language, dramatic action, exits and entrances, soliloquies in the drama texts
- the possible use of a poetry text or a novel and how methods there shape meaning
- the writers’ uses of structural, linguistic, narrative voices and other devices to shape meanings, etc

Given that this is a **closed book** exam, comment on the ways meanings are shaped may be generalised.

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

With respect to contextual issues arising from the question and the texts:

In writing about ‘audiences and readers’ and ‘final sense of joy’, students will specifically be engaging with dramatic and social contexts and the context of the affections. In discussing whether audiences and readers are left with a final sense of joy, students will be engaging with and demonstrating understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which the texts were written and how they have been received. Focus might be on:

- Hardcastle’s throwing a party for the poor of the parish in *She Stoops to Conquer*,
- the triumph of good will and cheerfulness, perhaps the silencing of Lady Bracknell in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, possible subtext that Earnest is a euphemism for ‘homosexual’ and, given Wilde’s imprisonment, there may be a darker edge, etc
- Emma’s understanding and endorsement of Harriet’s love for Robert Martin, her beginning to value the lower social classes perhaps
- Queenie’s belief in *Small Island* that her child will have a better and good future with Hortense and Gilbert reflecting the beginnings of an integrated society
- praise from the Host to the Nun’s Priest for such a good tale, the happy moral of the tale since lessons have been learned not to trust flatterers, etc

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts.

With respect to connections with the wider comedic genre:

In writing about ‘final’ and ‘sense of joy’, and how audiences feel, students will be connecting with the comedic concepts of potential well-being, entertainment and comic resolutions. Focus might be on:

- the marriages in *She Stoops to Conquer* and the sense of happiness, with all issues resolved
- the ‘plethora’ of marriages at the end of *The Importance of Being Earnest*, perhaps an undercurrent in that men are dishonest (Gwendolyn is cynical of their ability to tell the truth),
- the marriages at the end of *Emma*
- the birth of the child as a unifying force in *Small Island*
- the happiness of Pertelote and the part she plays in Chauntecleer’s rescue, happiness for the poor widow who has not lost her cockerel, etc

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.

With respect to meanings and interpretations:

Some students will agree with the proposition set up in the task and focus on:

- the triumph of the barmaid and Bet Bouncer, the triumph of country attitudes against those of the city, the delightful language in *She Stoops to Conquer*, etc
- the playful banter, the focus on triviality and Jack's being found in a handbag in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, etc
- Emma's growth as a woman, Emma's continued solicitations for her father, Mr Knightley's thoughtful consideration for Emma and her father, the optimistic upbeat narratorial voice, etc
- the growing love Hortense feels for Gilbert at the end of *Small Island*, their taking baby Michael as their own, Bernard's development of character and his understanding of Gilbert's worth
- the triumph of Chauntecleer and his outwitting of the fox
- sense of fun in Swift's satirical stab at the Duke of Marlborough, the moral message for pride to get its comeuppance, satisfaction of the speaker at his own cleverness at ridiculing the aristocratic Duke, Swift's speaking perhaps for the underclass of his day; the survival of Tam who escapes the witches, praise for Maggie from the narrator, delightful moral message delivered with cheerfulness: don't drink too much, sense of fun at the use of Scottish dialect; joy at the cleverness of the speaker's argument in 'The Flea' – because the lady is not weaker through her squashing of the flea, she should learn there will be no loss of honour if she yields to the speaker; different endings depending on the speaker in 'Not my Best Side', sense of fun at the parody of traditional tale of rescue, etc

Some will disagree and focus on:

- the way that in *Emma* there are still disturbing issues – the snobbery which seems to be endorsed by the novel (Emma is appalled that Harriet might marry Mr Knightley because it would be degrading for him), the selfishness of Mr Woodhouse which does not change, etc
- in *She Stoops to Conquer*, perhaps a sense that no one can be trusted since all set out to deceive, perhaps a hint from Hardcastle that Kate might deceive Marlow when she is his wife, Tony Lumpkin's defiance of his mother, etc
- in *Small Island*, racism still exists and Queenie has had to give up her baby, there is also the unhappiness experienced by Bernard who now knows his wife has been unfaithful
- Chauntecleer's failure to see the suffering he caused, etc
- the loss of Maggie's tail and the possibility that when Tam gets home he will be scolded by his wife; from a feminist perspective some disquiet at the arrogance of the speaker in 'The Flea' who thinks he can conquer with his intellectual cleverness; the lack of compassion for the Duke of Marlborough, who despite his shortcomings, is still dead, there is something uncomfortable about the speaker's desire to see him damned; the disrespect shown towards women in 'Sunny Prestatyn', the grim picture of modern life and billboard advertising; the divisions between husband and wife in 'Mrs Sisyphus', her contempt for the work he is doing, his entrapment; the final word in 'Not my Best Side' being given to the contemptible knight, who is arrogant, emotionally sterile – perhaps suggesting that such attitudes lead to success in the modern world, etc

Accept any valid interpretations, any valid comments on contexts of production and reception and any relevant integrated comment on dramatic methods that are embedded into the argument.

Question 08

‘In comedic literature, humour is primarily provided by the uncultivated behaviour and speech of the lower social classes.’

To what extent do you agree with this view in relation to **two** texts you have studied? Remember to include in your answer relevant comment on the ways the writers have shaped meanings.

[25 marks]

Some possible content is given below. It suggests some of the ways the Assessment Objectives might be addressed. Some ideas will inevitably address more than one AO.

Examiners must also remember that, because students have read and studied the two texts through the lens of **comedy**, the AOs must necessarily be connected to that genre through the task.

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

With respect to competence in writing:

- quality of argument as students address ‘To what extent’ they agree with the given view
- organisation of ideas
- use of appropriate concepts and terminology
- technical accuracy

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

With respect to dramatic/authorial method:

Focus might be on:

- the structure of the drama texts in relation to the task
- the use of dialogue, language, dramatic action, exits and entrances, soliloquies and asides in the drama texts
- the possible use of a poetry text or a novel and how methods there shape meaning
- the writers’ uses of structural, linguistic, narrative voices and other devices to shape meanings, etc

Given that this is a **closed book** exam, comment on the ways meanings are shaped may be generalised.

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

With respect to contextual issues arising from the question and the texts:

In writing about ‘humour’ and ‘the speech and behaviour of the lower social classes’, students will specifically be engaging with dramatic, linguistic and social contexts. In discussing whether humour is ‘primarily provided’ by the speech and behaviour of the lower social classes, students will be engaging with and demonstrating understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which the texts were written and how they have been received.

Focus might be on:

- the servants in *She Stoops to Conquer*, their drunkenness, singing and way of life in *The Three Jolly Pigeons*
- Lane, who catches some of his master’s wit and adds some of his own in *The Importance of Being Earnest*
- the comedy provided by Miss Bates in *Emma* through her speech patterns, her obsessions and repetitive conversations (although, of course, Miss Bates is not strictly speaking ‘of the lower social classes’ Emma wrongfully treats her as such, much to Mr Knightley’s disgust)
- Hortense and Gilbert as lower class representatives telling their stories with humour and laughing at themselves while doing so, Levy’s not laughing at ‘them’ as such but at their behaviour – particularly Hortense’s pretentiousness and affectations
- the use of allegory in *The Nun’s Priest’s Tale* and the humour provided by animals as representations of humans, etc

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts.**With respect to connections with the wider comedic genre:**

In writing about ‘humour’ and ‘the speech and behaviour of the lower social classes’ (and in writing about higher class human speech and behaviour as a counter argument), students will be connecting with the comedic concepts of humour, the lower social classes being the target of comedy and all human behaviour and speech as potentially being ridiculous.

Focus might be on:

- the behaviour and deceptions of Jack and Algernon in their inventions of alternative lives, their uses of paradoxical and epigrammatic pronouncements, the speech and behaviour of Lady Bracknell, Lane, Miss Prism
- Tony Lumpkin’s lower class behaviour and his desire for Bet Bouncer in *She Stoops to Conquer*, the behaviour of Marlow and Hastings and the ridiculousness of their behaviour even though they are higher class, Kate and her dissembling and pretending to be a barmaid, etc
- the vulgar Mrs Elton as representative of the nouveau riche
- Hortense and her pretentious behaviour and attempts to ape sophisticated speech, etc

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.**With respect to meanings and interpretations:**

Some students will agree with the proposition set up in the task and focus on:

- the humour provided at The Three Jolly Pigeons in *She Stoops to Conquer*, etc
- Jack, perhaps as lower social class because he is regarded as such by Lady Bracknell, comment might be on his wit and the absurdity of his pretences, the playful banter, the focus on triviality and Jack's being found in a handbag in *The Importance of Being Earnest*
- Mrs Elton who is of a lower class than Emma, her pretensions, speech patterns, perhaps Harriet and her simpering, the loquaciousness of Miss Bates, etc
- Queenie, who might well be discussed in terms of the lower social class, as might Gilbert and Hortense, Hortense's pretensions to be superior might well be seen as the essence of the novel's comedy, etc
- the widow and her daughters, in *The Nun's Priest's Tale*, the farmyard characters who may represent the lower social classes, etc
- Tam o' Shanter and his drunken friends, Tam's ridiculous behaviour, when drunk; the poster girl in 'Sunny Prestatyn'; Mrs Sisyphus and her direct address to the reader, her disrespectful commentary on her husband's work, her use of colloquialisms; the girl in 'Not my Best Side', her sexual language, repetition, etc

Some will disagree and focus on:

- the outrageous behaviour of Lady Bracknell and the wit and repartee of the sophisticated Jack and Algernon as being much more humorous
- the humour provided by Emma's blind folly, the sarcastic humour of John Knightley and his stabbing remarks to Mr Woodhouse, the respectful way the Martins are presented (despite Emma's claims that Robert Martin is a clown, neither he nor his family is ridiculed by Austen)
- the sophistry and clever punning of the speaker in 'The Flea'; the voice of the satirist in 'Elegy', the debunking of the aristocratic Duke, his being the target of humour; St George in 'Not my Best Side' who is shown to be ridiculous in his vanity; the speaker's mother-in-law in 'My Rival's House' whose apparent refinement is mocked by the speaker, etc

Some students might separate speech and behaviour and argue in different ways. Discussion needs to focus on 'primarily'.

Accept any valid interpretations, any valid comments on contexts of production and reception and any relevant integrated comment on dramatic methods that are embedded into the argument.