



General Certificate of Education

English Literature 5746 *Specification B*

LTB2 Genre Study: Poetry and Drama

Mark Scheme

2005 examination – June series

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

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of candidates' 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.

LTB2 Genre Study: Poetry and Drama

Skills Descriptors Poetry

BAND 1: MARK RANGE 0 – 5

- AO2i simple account of content regardless of task
AO3 very little understanding of language features and structural devices
AO3 very little discussion of how author’s techniques shape meanings
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BAND 2: MARK RANGE 6 – 10

- AO2i some focus on the task with basic textual knowledge; a little illustrative support
AO3 some limited understanding of language features and structural devices
AO3 some limited discussion of how author’s techniques shape meanings
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BAND 3: MARK RANGE 11 – 15

- AO2i focus on task with some knowledge and understanding of text; some illustrative support
AO3 some understanding of language features and structural devices
AO3 some discussion of how author’s techniques shape meanings
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BAND 4: MARK RANGE 16 - 20

- AO2i clear focus on task with informed knowledge and understanding of the text: apt supportive references
AO3 consideration of language features and structural devices
AO3 consideration of how author’s techniques shape meanings
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BAND 5: MARK RANGE 21 - 25

- AO2i detailed knowledge and understanding of the text and task: good selection of supportive references
AO3 exploration of language features and structural devices
AO3 some evaluation of how author’s techniques shape meanings
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BAND 6: MARK RANGE 26-30

- AO2i secure, confident and well informed understanding of the text and task: excellent selection of supportive reference
AO3 exploration and analysis of key language features and structural devices
AO3 perceptive evaluation of how author’s techniques shape meanings

Skills Descriptors
Drama

BAND 1: MARK RANGE 0 – 5

- AO1 technical weaknesses which impede the communication of meaning and unclear line of argument
- AO2i simple account of plot events or some simple statement about character regardless of task
- AO5i very limited awareness of context
- AO5i very limited relevance to text/context/task
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BAND 2: MARK RANGE 6 – 12

- AO1 simple attempt at structuring argument and some use of critical vocabulary but some technical weakness
- AO2i some focus on the task with basic textual knowledge; a little illustrative support
- AO5i some limited awareness of context
- AO5i some limited awareness of links across text/context/task
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BAND 3: MARK RANGE 13 – 19

- AO1 use of critical vocabulary and generally clear expression and some structured argument
- AO2i focus on task with some knowledge and understanding of text; some illustrative support
- AO5i awareness of the importance of context
- AO5i awareness of links across text/context/task
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BAND 4: MARK RANGE 20 - 26

- AO1 clear expression and use of accurate critical vocabulary and clear line of argument
- AO2i clear focus on task with informed knowledge and understanding of the text: apt supportive references
- AO5i clear consideration of context
- AO5i clear consideration of links across text/context/task
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BAND 5: MARK RANGE 27 - 33

- AO1 accurate expression and effective use of appropriate critical vocabulary and well structured argument
 - AO2i detailed knowledge and understanding of the text and task: good selection of supportive references
 - AO5i detailed exploration of context
 - AO5i detailed exploration of links across text/context/task
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BAND 6: MARK RANGE 34 – 40

- AO1 technically fluent style and use of appropriate critical vocabulary and well structured and coherent argument
- AO2i secure, confident and well informed understanding of the text and task: excellent selection of supportive reference
- AO5i excellent understanding and explanation of context
- AO5i excellent understanding and explanation of links across text/context/task

Question Specific Notes

The following question specific notes are intended for use in conjunction with the overall generic band descriptors. These notes are NOT intended to be prescriptive but are designed to indicate some of the rationale behind the setting of the questions and to demonstrate the links between questions and the designated assessment objectives. Examiners should always be prepared to reward any well-argued, relevant initiatives shown by candidates in their responses.

Section A: Poetry

Question 1 CHAUCER: The Miller's Tale

Possible content:

- (a)
 - Details of her dress and physical appearance;
 - Admiration of narrator for her figure;
 - Energy and vitality of her movement; her singing.
- (b)
 - The attention paid to appearance suggests Alison's own satisfaction with it;
 - The use of natural imagery, superlatives, alliteration and rhyming couplets all contribute to the creation of a vibrant, positive, earthy image.
- (c)
 - Alison is catalyst for the action;
 - Her playfulness is also vital to the story's denouement;
 - She is the only character who escapes punishment.

Question 2 DONNE: Prescribed Poems

Possible content:

- (a)
 - Fidelity, loyalty and constancy are not found in women; fickleness and infidelity are;
 - Views are cynical and misogynistic.
- (b)
 - A catalogue of impossibilities culminates in the impossibility of finding 'a woman true and fair';
 - Lightness of metre and use of monosyllabic couplet in each stanza reinforces sense of mockery/sarcasm, together with the colloquial language.
- (c)
 - Many to choose from e.g. *The Canonization*, *The Good Morrow*, *The Sunne Rising*, focusing on language and form.

Question 3 MILTON: Paradise Lost Book I

Possible content:

- (a)
- Divine inspiration is sought;
 - This is a combination of the Holy Spirit and the traditional literary inspiration of Classical muse.
- (b)
- Sentence structure;
 - Word order;
 - Weighty, elevated language;
 - All combine to impress a sense of gravity upon audience.
- (c)
- Look for some analysis of short passages that could be said to match content with style – the choice is wide!

Question 4 BLAKE: Songs of Innocence and of Experience

Possible content:

- (a)
- The clod: love as self-denying, self-sacrificing, optimistic and devoted to others;
 - The pebble: love as possessive, jealous and destructive.
- (b)
- Three stanzas, each definition pivoting around stanza 2;
 - Slight variation in simple rhyme scheme in 2 (i.e. clay/brook);
 - Repetition/reversal ('a Heaven in Hell' etc.);
 - Symbolism.
- (c)
- This can be human love/care/compassion e.g. *Infant Joy*, *Nurse's Song (Innocence)*;
 - Or human/divine love e.g. *The Divine Image*.

Question 5 BARRETT BROWNING: Sonnets from the Portuguese

Possible content:

- (a)
 - She requests her lover's presence to replace the mental image of him surrounded by her thoughts.
- (b)
 - Central image of trees and vines is set up in the first quatrain;
 - Argument turns at line 8 – 'Renew thy presence' – the tree shakes off vines and can be seen clearly;
 - Reversal – 'I think of thee' to 'I do not think of thee.'
- (c)
 - Extremely wide choice, but candidates should demonstrate the appropriateness of their choice through a focus upon language and form.

Question 6 BRONTË: Prescribed Poems

Possible content:

- (a)
 - Nature offers 'breezes', 'sunshine', and 'twilight', all of which 'drive griefs away' and 'enchant and soothe'.
- (b)
 - The semantic field suggests 'taming', 'controlling', 'enchancing';
 - Nature is given a voice that offers care and divine compassion on an Earth that is Heaven;
 - The poem is a monologue and the implied listener is one whose 'mind is ever moving /in regions dark'.
- (c)
 - Nature is often seen as consolatory;
 - It is presented also as a positive contrast to inner life of human figure or as a reflection of an inner mood.

Section B: Drama

Question 7(a) MILLER: Death of a Salesman

Focus: father-son relationships in post-war American social context.

Possible content:

- Importance of the domestic unit in this society;
- The role of the father-figure and absence of same in Willy's life;
- Is Ben a surrogate?;
- The fractured relationship with Biff and 'phoniness' of Willy's values;
- The tension with Linda;
- The contrast with Charley and Bernard;
- The significance of sporting prowess and the cult of 'manliness' and personality

Question 7 (b) MILLER: Death of a Salesman

Focus: presentation of Willy within a possibly 'tragic' context.

Possible content:

- The extent to which Willy may be seen as a victim of a society which demands everything from individuals, exploits, then casts aside;
- As a man who has tried hard, according to his lights, and been betrayed by the system;
- Or as a weak and rather foolish figure, dishonest with himself and those around him. Is he to be sympathised with, or despised?

Question 8 (a) WILLIAMS: A Streetcar Named Desire

Focus: consideration of Blanche's presentation in the context of tragic drama.

Possible content:

- Williams creates a complex character in Blanche so that what is valuable and attractive in her – vivacity, imagination, fragility and eloquence – is balanced against her snobbery, lies and manipulative tendencies;
- If 'tragic' = 'vulnerable', then she is tragic and setting her in opposition to Stanley means she is doomed;
- There is, therefore, a kind of tragic inevitability to her; her scenes with Mitch increase the audience's sympathies for her.

Question 8 (b) WILLIAMS: A Streetcar Named Desire

Focus: sexual identity and the gender context of *Streetcar*

Possible content:

- Allan as an embodiment of Williams' own homosexuality – a figure who destroys himself;
- Male/female roles in *A Streetcar Named Desire* could be seen as 'polarised', with the ultra-feminine (Blanche) destroyed by the ultra-masculine (Stanley);
- Could be seen as demonstrating that the female principle (in both Blanche and Allan) is vulnerable in this society unless it adapts (like Stella).

Question 9 (a) BECKETT: Waiting for Godot

Focus: the play in the context of dramatic modes

Possible content:

- Vladimir and Estragon could be seen to live in a ‘tragic’ world: it appears to have no meaning and they spend time waiting for something that does not happen; they cannot understand the events that happen around them; they have little in the way of possessions;
- But it is also an ‘absurd’ world and provokes laughter e.g. amusing routines, strange reversals, earthy jokes and occasional bizarre verbal fireworks.

Question 9 (b) BECKETT: Waiting for Godot

Focus: the characters in the context of the play’s ‘meanings’.

Possible content:

- They are two clown/tramp figures – possible symbols of the human condition;
- They are puzzled, but seek enlightenment; they try to make sense of the world around them; they are (largely) loyal to one another and cling to each other for support; they have moments of despair and bleakness but try to keep each other amused;
- And life seems to duplicate these features day after day. What does this suggest about life?

Question 10 (a) OSBORNE: Look Back in Anger

Focus: Jimmy in the context of British society in the 1950s.

Possible content:

- Helena suggests Jimmy is ‘a rebel without a cause’. Thus, a figure who rails against the world around him because he seeks an ‘enthusiasm’ to attach himself to and finds only pettiness and triviality;
- Osborne presents him as both ‘irritated’ and an irritant – so that he is a reactive/passive character, rather than proactive;
- Osborne gives him a university education and a working-class background, and pits him against the middle-classes and middle-class women in particular.

Question 10 (b) OSBORNE: Look Back in Anger

Focus: male/female relationships in the play’s context.

Possible content:

- Jimmy’s general attitude is misogynistic; he detests the demands women make upon him, but he is prepared to exploit them domestically and sexually – the exception is the sentimentalised woman who set him up in his sweet stall;
- Helena and Alison differ: Helena is antagonistic on the surface, but ready to step into Alison’s shoes – women presented as disloyal to each other? Cliff is sentimental and easy-going – a protective figure, unlike Jimmy.

Question 11 (a) CHURCHILL: Top Girls

Focus: presentation of women's success in play's context.

Possible content:

- Candidates will no doubt give accounts of the female characters in Act 1 who, in their different ways, broke through the 'glass ceilings' of their day;
- This 'celebration' should be tempered by an assessment of Marlene's presentation, which suggests that the 'losses' may be equal to the 'gains' in the changes to lives, especially when Joyce's life is taken into consideration.

Question 11 (b) CHURCHILL: Top Girls

Focus: male/female relationships in context of play and 1980s.

Possible content:

- Significance of complete *absence* of males, who are only *spoken* about;
- Marlene, Nell, Win have short-term relationships, free from 'commitment', sometimes adulterous, in which sex appears to be 'recreational' or its consequences aborted;
- Joyce and Mrs. Kidd are examples of married women of different kinds and whose attitudes to, and relationships with men, may be contrasted with single women.

Question 12 (a) SHAFFER: Amadeus

Focus: effect of historical context of *Amadeus*.

Possible content:

- The play is set in the ‘Age of Reason’ – ironic? – since it concerns ‘passions’ of various kinds: passion for music, success, sex; negative passions of envy/jealousy; and the mysterious and transcendental nature of genius and creativity;
- Vienna is presented as a city of culture, supported by patronage – creativity has to deal with the frustrations and interventions of power, represented by Joseph and the Court circle. This produces the conflicts and tensions central to the drama.

Question 12 (b) SHAFFER: Amadeus

Focus: the mundane v. the extraordinary in the play’s context.

Possible content:

- The ways in which the two composers ‘contrast’ through their *characters* and through their *compositions* – Salieri comes to regard himself as ‘the patron saint of Mediocrities’, whilst Mozart, despite his puerile behaviour, transcends this limitation;
- Shown e.g. in the way in which Mozart’s touch transfigures Salieri’s welcoming march. Both men are destroyed by Salieri’s envy of Mozart’s gifts.